

THE
FEATS AND DEFEATS

—OF AN—

ARKANSAW SHOWMAN,

—BY—

PROF. ALLEHUE SHACKLEFOOTE,

MAGICIAN & AND & CONJURER

Together with the Experiences and Experiments in
the begining of his Practice and life in the Back-
woods of Arkansaw. With Interesting,
Amusing and Instructive Reading
to all Classes of Moral Society
and Fun loving Readers.

EXCELSIOR SPRINGS, MO.:
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PREFACE.



The only apology that I shall offer in presenting to this, our noble public, the "Arkansaw Showman" is; I have never before offered one sentence of my situation and unfortunate life for publication; have never lounged about hotels, boarding houses, and Cross road grog shops, and told of the many startling scenes and difficulties that I have fallen a victim to, in the course of my comparative early life; have never exposed the secrets of a showman's trials, and trickeries, which this volume unfolds, nor have never made known before, the many little scrapes and misfortunes that have prevailed upon me; and now if I should ever be the means of instructing, amusing, or interesting one fellow mortal, I shall be amply rewarded for all the trouble, time, and labor, bestowed upon this work; and trust that before you have scanned it thoroughly, that you may find something of interest and value. And hoping therefore, that you all, as a feeling community, will pardon the haste, manner, and conduct in which I have given you the "History of the Case." And fearing you should perhaps judge me eulogizing upon the subject, I remain your most humble servant.

SHACKLEFOOTE.

PORCUPINE HOLLOW, ARK., U. S. A.

ERRATA.

A few typographical errors have escaped the proof-reader's eye in the following pages; but none are of a serious nature, and the reader can easily detect and correct them.—PUBLISHER.

A New Edition

—OF THE—

FEATS AND DEFEATS

—OF AN—

ARKANSAW SHOWMAN.

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EXCELSIOR SPRINGS, MO.

PROF. ALLEHUE SHACKLEFOOTE, OR THE

Arkansas Showman.

CHAPTER I.

BURSTING THE JIG, OR STARTING THE LAWYER.

AIR—The tatters tune or lawyer's march through the corn-field.

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When people write love letters,
They should be very careful how,
For if they don't they'd better;
Or they're sure to have a row.
When Lawyers go to by a cow
Without a price done set;
They'd better prepare, to have a row.
For that they are sure to get.

OLD BETSEY.

EVER in the course of human events, is there anything more important, or interesting, or ties more binding, than is the parentage of one's own existence. Of this, I can face the whole five races of mankind, and claim for my parents, the most favorable traits of untarnished character, our country have ever known; but, as I am consoled on this fact, that none who have ever known either of them, will doubt for a moment, or deny my allegation. I shall not attempt to worry you with their history, or present you with their descendancy; but, must annoy you with a short and sketched history of my youthful life, for a time at least.

I was, of course, like all other good citizens, born in the year Eighteen Hundred and—Anno Domini, in the month of January, in one of Hoosier States. And as my parents, being of the most rambling disposition, I were almost invariably raised

on the road. Yes, in that dread month when hoary frosts, and chilly blasts, when frigid air and frozen earth, had intervened; when the icy hand of winter, snow bound down its fetters, and the fields and meadows were all divested of their green attire; when the forests were stripped of their greenest array, and were clothed in their snowy robes; and here amid such dense melancholy came forth my existence.

As I previously remarked, that my parents showed the most intense love for travel, and servation, I was but a small portion of humanity, when I embarked on that great vessel of strife and contention—found no where else so complete as in travel—yet, how many are never contented without roaming the world over and over; of which I happened to be one of the immortal few. But, as that is of but little importance, now. I must proceed with my subject, and if possible, endeavor to tell of something that may likely be of importance. How I shudder to tell it to the world; not that I care for myself, but care, lest it should fall into the hands of some of its co-workers, and persons in whom it is concerned; and then, besides, to occupy so much space, in this chapter, to tell so much without interesting my readers; but I hope dear reader, that you will grant me one pardon for bringing into my subject the school-room, but I will promise to tell no tales of school-boy days; nor does it enter into my subject, as a part, but merely a place of reference, where my first fate occurred. I had grown to be a lad of some size, had done a fair share of traveling, when one day I happened, partly to see what was going on inside that little quiet school house by the way-side, and partly to see the old gentleman that was teaching. I entered the humble little hut, had a good long conversation with the old school master, who seemed very much interested in me, and before I left, insisted on me to come and spend the winter in his little school. I made some excuses, and told him that I would call and see him often—but before I went I changed my notion, to some extent, for there in that little congregation, was the most lovely little creature that ever any human eye beheld. Oh! what a feeling came over me, this was my first temptation! Although she did not possess the charms that most modern

beauties are so apt to have on such occasions ; she was beautiful in the extreme ; although she did not possess the dark flashing, sparkling, piercing, eyes, of the Elizas and Delilas ; nor the beautiful symmetrical, low, dowdy, rotund, chubby little damsel, nor had she the dark, heavy, luxuriant, waving curls, that such little maidens are so likely to have ; nor was she her mamma's only little pet, who would not let any one court around her ; no she was neither, although she was on the opposite scale of beauty, she was still beautiful ; her soft gray eyes, her fawn-like figure, her yellow tresses of golden hair, swinging sofly down her neck ; her gentle voice so low and sweet, soon set the electro-magnetic nerve in my heart, which still survived and increased, till it absorbed my entire being. I watched, and tried, and worked and toiled, for many long weeks, months and even years, without any success or anything like it, till at last I attempted to find out at the cost of whatever might be the consequences. But I had given too much of my time to traveling the world, and observing the ways of great cities, wild countries, dense forests, broad prairies and vast plains ; instead of cultivating my manly attributes, or learning the ways and means of "Courtships fatal errors," from lack of right management ; and now must suffer in a measure for transgression—for a sin of omission—in that, that I had not fulfilled nature's instinctive law, and first pre-requisite, in not learning to "court scientifically" and thoroughly ; hence I found that *the way of the transgressor is hard* ; and nature will not let those go unpunished, who have thus trespassed on her laws. But how am I to know what traits to cultivate, or tastes and talents to improve ? or have I time to go abroad, and learn from those already initiated in the powers of Courtship, for information on this most interesting affair ? No, my love, feelings and entire being was already wrought up to its highest pitch of passion, and to too full an extent to bear such a delay ; but, how am I to proceed ? I wondered, I pondered—would I, like I had in all other cases, walk straight to Mollie, and tell her in a bold and manly way, my thoughts, feelings and aspirations ? which if I had, might have "tick," but when our consciences

desert us, in the critical and most valuable moment; when it could be dispensed with more easily in any other case, than in our affairs of "setting out." This was my trying point; still I could not "muster" the courage to call on Miss Mollie and tell her in my own natural language, how sincerely and intensely I did love her. No, I could not. I thought as I had often been in many places, and that my feelings had often been aroused by some strange occurrence, and never failed to make my way out, I thought I might do as well this time—but I could not: failure showed its sunny side, and this was a stand off point. I thought of many things that might "take," if I could be courageous enough to put them into execution, till finally I made one desperate struggle of thought, when I thought "eureka," (I've found it), had hit upon the trick, at last: had plummed the track, and driven grim care and contention, far, far away! I would write her a note—a legitimate piece of business—that could not be out of place, nor ignored by: no princess of any Province. Yes, it was an easy way the world had adopted, so generously fixed for her fellow-individuals to correspond in innocent conversation, without the third, fourth or fifth person to interfere. Yes, it was easy to write Miss Mollie a note, and thus introduce myself to her, when she would respond, and then my fortune would be completed—I would only have to do the rest by gallantly proffering her my heroic protection and attention—by pleasantly conveying her to balls, parties, pic-nics—anywhere and everywhere that she might feel willing to go. Oh, how I could imagine my glory, basking in the genial rays of her fond affections, while riding, walking, talking, and enjoying with her, Nature's all-wise provisions for lovers' amusements and pleasure! Yes, I would write Miss Mollie a note; but it must be done in an exquisite manner, as Mollie was an exquisite girl, or it would touch her effeminate feelings, and that would render all things nugatory—it must have some high-perfaluton anatomical, phraseological, cut-and-dried words, phrases and sentences in it; however, I was not to be baffled out of this, and remembering Charley White's proverb: "Challenge your pate and fancy wit will come," I at once set my wit to doing its *best licks*; but I would have done well not to have

done it at all; but nevetheless, I procured some fancy literary material—and, was it not for the annoyance of my readers, would subjoin its contents here; but will proceed to futher particulars—I composed and completed it in the best manner possible, which was considerably passable, to have nothing to commence about, for, this was my first attempt; for, never, had I spoken to any one, on the subject of matrimony, or its appendages for, if I had, I might have done differntly. Yes, if I had known what I ought to have known, I might have never had cause to so bitterly repent of my first attempt at love letter writing. But, the letter done, how was I to get it off? or by what means, or by whom was it to be sent? the post office was but a short distance and it would cost but a fraction of nothing to mail it; but would that be safe? would she get it, or would her big sisters, or big brothers get it, and plague her out? or would her great big brawny dad get it? and read my stupid weakness, and my deep admirations of his little daughter; which would demolish my thoughts and feelings; but I was not to be whipped out in this, I pocketed the instrument, that was to decide my fate with Mollie. There was in that same little schoolhouse, where first I saw that charming one, going to be a meeting of the M. E. Church and now was my time for execution with that troublesome article—and I must procure some means of conveyance: perhaps some of you will say, “why did you not walk right up to her and give it to her yourself, and say no more about it?” Ah, would to the Almighty Father I had had the courage to do so much, but must now only sigh a heavey sigh, to tell you how I done. It was a lovely evening in the month of July, when nature’s kind providence, had filled the earth with its abundance in store, the floral and vegetable kingdom, was all in their most luxuriant beauty; when the forests and groves are giving back their greenest apparel, by the same Omnipotent hand which, but a few short months ago, had stripped them of all their glorious and gorgeous splendor! and consequently in a manificent grove, adjacently situated near the little school house, the good people had gone to the grove for an evening’s devotion; thus leaving the school house to free access to those not devout enough to

seek consolation in the congregation of worshippers. This was my only resort—my last effort—there were her brother, but you need not know his name, because those who may ever see this will no doubt know enough, without ever wanting to know his name—for, if ever there were any one on earth, who was tormenting and troublesome, it was him, for every moments time in his life, he was playing some mischievous trick on some one; but, I thought I could trust him with my business;—at least I thought I would try it at any rate. But if ever I repented of doing any thing, I repented of this. But forced to make a trial to give Mollie the letter, I took him to one side, and told him that I had something of great importance to tell him, and if he would quit his confounded carelessness, and act right about it I would like to have his service on the operation—of course he agreed to everything I told him, and said, he was one of the kind that could do just as he was told to do I then told him that I had a little note, that I wanted to give to Mollie, and if he would say nothing about it, would like to have him give it to her; he avowed that nothing could induce him to ever “squeal” about it, that he would give it to her and say no more about it; I then handed him the abominable institution, gave some instructions, and went into the house; stretched myself out on a bench, thinking how easy a thing it was, to write ones thoughts and feelings, and have no one to know nothing about it, but the one intended to know it; and thinking what Mollie would say; would it tickle her to the heart to see such a fine big love letter? and would she write such a one to me, or would it be a modest little piece of feminine loveliness. Presently her brother came in sat down with some more of his clique, and began talking very low and indistinct, when I began to comprehend what was going on, for they had been whispering very low, when suddenly they all got up and walked out of the house, giving me a rather suspicious look, as though to tell me of what was going to be done, I immediately followed them out and told the lad that I had concluded not to send the note to Mollie, that it might not be agreeable with her, and I did not want to impose myself upon any one unless

I knew for certain, or, unless I had some better right; but he declared it would all be right enough; but I still persisted in having it in my possession; but it was all in vain, the crowd of boys were gathering around us as thick as gnats around the mouth of an alligator, the congregation was about to disband, and all the whole Church of "Zion" would take a part, or else look upon the scene with wonder and astonishment. What was I to do? I had got my foot in a sling, and how was I to extricate it, I told him to give it to me, and I would give it to her, but I might as well to have talked to the clouds, the boys (or demons) were telling him to 'stick to it, keep it for future reference, don't you give it up,' 'hang to 'er.' By this time, he had taken it from his pocket in order to transfer it to one of the others, I made a grab for it, but one of the 'infernal infamous, ignominious hounds, snatched it from his hand and made his exit into a thicket close by. Great Czars maria! don't tickle my chin so I war'n't it fun for them though? but I didn't use that kind, I felt like I had had the great bird of American liberty right by the end of the tail, and it had flown from me in all its proud glory, like Fritz's flee; ven I vants him, I reaches for him, ant I pe cot tam it, he ish not dare too. but that was not all. But kind fortune, one consolation amid all these difficulties, whether the chirography was the cause' or whether their noggins were not capable of expounding its meaning, I could not tell; but they did not get much satisfaction out of it, but they tried most wonderfully hard, to get my Jewish proclivities roused—but I was too deeply interested in something else; and beside, I knew too well, that they were just trying to force a little more fun out of me, than I was in a humor to let go. Yes indeed, I was too deeply involved in the thoughts of Mollie—what would she say? would she brave the confusion that had been thrust upon us? or would she scorn me for thus bringing such vague interruption upon her? or was I to blame? or was some one else? or who? or what was to be done? Oh! oh! phew! phew! what destruction; and right in the deepest of my agonies, who must come in but the old "Sea hoss,"—her great big dad—took a seat not far from me

and commencing something in the way of fixing up some of his books; when he was about to leave the house, some of them told him to read the letter that they had confiscated; but fortunately he had "left his specks to home," and said he could not read it, how I did think of something to do—how I prayed for "the mountains to fall upon me, and hide me," from the hideous monster now before me, it was getting late, and the crowd was gathering 'round the door like "niggers" at a dog fight; they were getting anxious to see the end, and was telling one another, and chee-hee-en, and ha-ha-en as though some of them were getting a real feast out of it. But just as they were enjoying it to the delight of their very souls, "oid Jeff," come walking up, and in his loud clarion voice said; "hand him that thing," they tried to refuse him; but he might as well tried to resist the Mexican giant, for he said "hand me that," he reluctantly handed him the article—he then handed it to me and said; "there take that and—," well I will not say what the old hulk said then; but after I took it he said, "if he ever heard any more of me a scribbling to one of his girls, again, he would give me a——good booting." Oh ye demons of eternal darkness, who ruleth the evil of man, deliver me from thy presence, and never allow me to meet such again; snakes, and subsequent serpents, uncoil thy self from the force thou hast taken upon me, take your daughters, and give my freedom and liberty to me! I took the insignificant, dod drated thing—and tore it into liggets—but who was to blame—I could not tell—how was I to be avenged? the old "sea hoss," was out of reason, as one blow from his comparative "hog head" fist, would burst me like an egg under the foot of an elephant, and it was no use trying to get even with him—I could do nothting but "bear and grin." But I was not satisfied with such—I could see Miss Mollie no more, because I could not look at her without thinking of how fearfull I had done; no I could look into her lovely innocent eyes, and not dare speak to her; no I must get up and be away to some other country and distant land, to seek salvation for this miserable woe; as I had often done before; to forget this terifying difficulty. So then

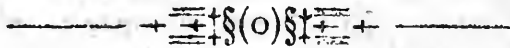
there was some place to be sought out to go to, but I was not long in finding some place to go, and some one to go with for there was in the neighborhood a company preparing to take a long journey into the west—fortunately for me, there was one man in the company who stood in great need of a horse, and I having as good a horse as ever was formed into a quadruped was quickly sought for, as soon as they found I would be willing to go, terms were soon settled upon, and ere long we set to work, preparing to get ready for our journey, but I must relate one little occurrence, that took place before we started upon our traveling tour, towards the western world, and to seek our destiny in a land so far away. The fellow that I had covenanted with to “go west,” was a kind of a puny witted man, and had a wife with poor health, hence his idea for going to the mountains; and he had a fellow staying with him, in fact he was his brother-in-law, and ’tis useless to tell his name, except as we all called him “Big Bill.” Well ’tis useless to try to give a description of him, or to tell how hard he was, for he was one that had no equal—nor had he ever been fathomed.

But however we had some fixing to do, and our partner could not well leave his family, so me and “Big Bill” had it all to do ourselves, so we had to go to the railroad station of J—to get our horses shod, and some other things needful, and on our return, four or five miles from home, “Big Bill” had an appointment out, which he had to stop and see how things were going; we stopped, threw down the lines, and walked up to the house, with as much deliberation as a Doctor going to make a collection, when we went in, there sat a great big fine young lawyer, reared back and talking as loud as if he were pleading a case at the bar; but when we entered the cabin, he began to cool down a little, and began making excuses, and pretending to want to buy the old lady’s cow; well she would hardly be called a lady either—but you see lawyers will act the “yaller dog,” and that was what he called her, perhaps many persons who may see this book, may probably know him by name, but I shall only call him lawyer G., But “Big Bill” knew the gent and knew that he did not want any cow,

and told him to be getting out of there, he tried to make some excuse, and said that him and the old "lady" could not agree upon the price of the cow, that he wanted to buy, but "Big Bill" told him that he didn't want any cow, and besides, he had better be getting out of there, if he wanted to keep his head sound; he appeared to be a little stubborn; but "Big Bill" told me to come and we would fix him, he made for the door, I had done as ordered to by Big Bill, and made a lick at him, and knocked off his hat, and by Big Bill coming closely after me, as lawyer G., bent over to pick up his hat, Big Bill gave him a blow with the toe of his ponderous boot, which sent him traveling on all four of his protuding extremities, I made another attempt to follow him, but I was too late, he had got pretty well straightened, and as I run at him my toe hit his hat and threw it into the weeds, and he made one more trial to get it; but I let him have it in about the same locality that Big Bill had proffered him one before, and that sent him riding down corn worse than a hungry sow, this time he went on his way rejoicing, he got farther into the cornfield and cleared himself, during which time we heard a tremendous racket, and the first thing we knew our team was a cross the creek, and if ever you heard wagon wheels, horse shoes, and old chains rattle over limestone, you could heard it then, it went like the rattling of ten thousand bridges falling together, and like the four wings of the wind had all come together and were up, rooting every tree in the forest, still they went rattle-tee-bang over limestones, fence rails, woodpiles and plank fences, but however, we could do nothing but go back and raise the old Harry; because the folks were as mad as hornets because we had affronted their "big bug" lawyer, but we told them that we "was runnin' that thing, and didn't want stock dealers there no how, and therefore we didn't intend to have any there either." But we stayed till about midnight, and I would like to tell you what kind of a time we had; but will not for fear you might think that I was exaggerating, so finally after we had threw the old gander down the chimney, and singed the old spotted cat's hair all off her body, and threw the old yellow dorg head formost into the well, and,

several other things of like desperation, as well as to done every time that it was not our time, and made every girl mad as a news boy when he sells the first daily, and left old Betsy's habitation in a kind of dilapidated condition, we started to find our team. We found them about three miles on our way home, where a friend of ours had stopped them, and kindly unhitched them, and tied them up for us till we might come along; luckily for us, he had left them near enough to the road as to be easily found, for it was as dark as the forlorn side of misfortune; but we managed to get them in order and started out for home; but we had to go past the blacksmith-shop to leave our wagon, to have it mended; we succeeded in getting it to the shop—but it was about three in the morning, and we did not want old Solomon,—the smith—to think we were so early, and so we left our wagon there, and then there were something else to be done, there we had two chairs to carry, for we did not want old Solomon to know where we had been, and we knew that if we left the chairs in the wagon, he would be sure to suspicion where we had been. So Bill took one, and I the other; then there were several other articles to be taken; such as a few rolls of goods; a bag with sugar and coffee; soda, coal oil, powder and many other articles necessary to the household and kitchen comfort, and what was we to do? neither of us had any saddle, and we had to take the harness, but we loaded up and struck out; we had about one mile and a half to go, and we had to travel through the Jack-oak bushes with nothing in the way of a road, but a small path—you can certainly imagine about what a comfortable ride we had—think of a roll under one arm, a bundle before a tug swinging under our horses feet, and catching on every grub snag, and brush, and a chair on your shoulder, coming in direct contact with protruding limbs that hung in abundant clusters along the rugged road. But it was useless to try to keep it a secret, for old Solomon was ever on the lookout for just such speculations, to add to his already long list of tattling, and tale telling, and was not long in making himself acquainted with the entire proceedings of the case, and it might as well been published and placed upon every leaf in the forest, and on every

fence rail, and in every chip pile, as for him to have known it for it was told by him far and near, and to every man that come to his shop, had to hear the whole story before he left; and every old woman in the neighborhood was runing and telling, and talking it all over the country, and at every wool-picking, and every quilting, and every where they gathered together, they were tattling and telling what Sol, should have said about Allehue Shacklefoote, and Big Bill Cornhill going to town and getting drunk, and going to the widow H——'s and breaking up the "frollick" some would say "well I wouldn't a thought they would a went to such a place let alone cuttin' up in that kind of a way," and some would say they "didn't think that Allehue Shacklefoote was that mean," but the main old mover of such fun for the "whimmin," would tell something like this "well indeed I don't know how it started, but anyhow I believe that Solomon heard it some where; well I just don't know where, but I believe Sol heard it over at Gards, and anyhow the news come to me, and I told Salina, and Salina she told Hannah, and Hannah told Darkess, and Darkess told Lizzie, and Lizzie told my Sarah, and my Sarah let the "cat out of the wallie" and by the time it got to Mollie it was changed a little here, and remodled a little there, and a new touch put to it there: and it was all worked over, and a new tale was entirly told; and it being bad enough without any new fixtures to it, was made out to her a monstrous looking affair. But I do not know what she said for it, was not long till we started upon our journey. Here now is the last ebb of my first troubles, read these lines while I take a trip to Morphens, and then if his ettiquette of entertainments are not too interesting. I'll tell you about it to-morrow, and now farewell till to-morrow comes.



CHAPTER II.

A JOURNEY INTO THE WEST.

AIR.—*The Battle in the Slough.*

Hark ! hark ! what do I hear ?

The red man he's surely there,
And scalped our friends so very dear,

And they are here no more.
 But lo! what have our comrades done,
 The battle is fought the victory's won
 And here lies dead, a little one,
 And weltering in its gore.

DIDIPPER.

Now for another rush. I would like to have told you of some more scrapes; that took place while me and Big Bill was fixing to get off, but I expect you are glad that I cannot. But I would like to have told you of our trip, to Groomer's mill, and what we done with part of the flour, and the row with Joe Nickison, and many other rummages, and rambles before we left, but space will not admit. I only want to tell you of the one that I did, to show you and all the rest of man and womenkind sort o'how completely I had bursted the "jig," with me and Mollie; but now I must proceed. The day arrived, and a great day it was, on the 27th of September, when the Author of alwise nature, was displaying its beauties and pleasures, as well as comforts, and riches of fruits, flowers, and vegetables, before the hoary hand of winter, had laid its vital forces upon the verdant vines and tender foliage; before the chilly air of the North, had driven the flies and the katydids into tiny homes, and all creation seems so fully set forth. Every thing was in readiness, and I had to go to my partners house, to be ready to make the start and meet our company at a little village some few miles away. My sisters, and one of my brothers went with me, to stay with me at our friends, before our departure; and there were several of my kind friends and dear cousins, as well as my dear sisters, gathered there, to spend the last fond friendly night with me, perhaps forever. But ah! my dear reader there was one still dearer to me than ever, that was not there. I had taken the parting hand with my Mother, and well do I remember the feelings still though many, many long years have rolled by and many strange scenes have past since then, but never have I felt the emotions that so indelibly stained its properties into my memory, never to be forgotten. Ah! reader have you ever took the parting hand with your own dear Mother, and felt this emotion; have you ever witnessed this scene, and seen your dear mother, shed those tears of affection for her

departing son; if you ever have you probably can feel and sympathize with me here, I had taken trips before, and traveled by my self, but never before had I felt such a rising sensation, as when I threw my valise over my shoulder, to start, my brother accompanied me to our friend's house, where my folks were all assembled to see me off—to see me start upon the long journey, to take the parting hand, and bid me a last farewell. There was not much sleeping done there, in that cabin that night, for Big Bill's brother was there with a fiddle, and my cousins as well as myself, and other brothers and sisters, and all together kept up a continual racket almost the whole night long. But alas! the day has arrived and now for it. We got to work fixing for the business, Jim the head of the house or old provider as Bill used to call him, was naturally a little excitable and everything was out of place with him, he run here and there, and while he was hunting around he found his coat where some geese had made a bed of it and that put him into a fit of vexation, let us get ready quick; Bill hitch old jule; hok by doggy, lets get ready quick or by doggy them there men will give us out, and then "laws-a-mercy, we'll have to go by our selves," but thought I old fellow if I was out of this snap, I'd be mighty careful how I undertook another. But it was too late, I had made the brake, and must stick to it like a "posuin to a hen roost," we got every thing ready and now was the trying part I felt as though every friend on earth was gone, and never to be seen again. Many were the kind words of advice, wise suggestions and warnings of many kind, given me by my sisters, and friends—some of them would say, now brother, you must be careful with yourself and not let the Indians take you, be careful with your money, yourself and your horse; take good care of your health and not get sick, and one of my sisters who was always extra careful in her admonitions, and careful cautions told me, now brother you must be cautious about your travels, and not do any rude tricks, like you are always getting into, and beside all others do not do any "green," tricks as so many young lads are apt to get into, in strange towns and cities, and strange countries; and be careful not to have any tales come back with you for you know how young boys are apt to,

get into, such and many other words, of advice and caution were given, and they all seemed to be sincerely interested in my welfare, as I was going to take an unusual long journey; and one thing made them more earnest about it, I was going to travel in a far distant land, where redskins were said to be as plenty as maggots in a cheese box, or toads in a mudhole, and now, we must go; we had a wonderful bad road to commence with; it was very bad indeed; muddy and hilly and owing to the runaway that our horses had had, I had to change horses with my father; and his horse was not as true as he could have been and we had a pretty trying job to get along -- my brother went with us a few miles, and then we proceeded on our way alone; we made it to our destiny appointed to meet our company and then; oh! how I regretted the time I had left my own parental roof; how I began to wish that I had my "possum back." many times would my mind float back to that dear old home where so many happy days I had squandered, I thought how kind my dear old aged parents had been to me, and how brutally I was treating them without a cause, and had brought all this agony upon myself and kind parents, and dear sisters for nothing but mere foolishness; I thought how kind and attentive my parents had always been to me, and how I would miss them, if by chance I should fall a victim to some ravaging disease. I thought of the tears my parents had shed when I bid farewell. I then thought how kind and tenderly they had watched over me when I was a child, and the care and trouble they had had with me, and now I was paying them off in such a way, I thought how kind my sisters and even my brothers was, always willing to let me have my way in anything; as I was somehow or other, it always happens that we fellows always are the youngest, I thought how often my sisters had been so willing to wait on me in any little spell of sickness, how they had even wept for me because I was only a little ill; and many other things presented themselves to my miserable feelings, which have long since faded from my memory; and I reckon you think why didn't I let it all go together; but I could not, but while filled with such remorse, I fell into a deep and profound doze and this ended my awful feelings for a time, and being

fatigued remained in the arms of sweet morpheus; and while slumber was weaving its fancy pictures upon my weary form, I was wafted away at a rapid rate untill that glorious orb chased darkness from the earth; and now the thing must still be done; it must be continued on. When we got ready to start on next morning, we found our crowd ready, and now we was all ready to roll wheels together. We marshalled our clan and stretched our train toward the Western World. At St. J—, we met some more of our crowd; some 15 or 20 young men were in the crowd, and some 8 or 10 families, besides ourselves, and those young fellows thought that they was as brave a set of men, as ever stood upon the banks of the "Big Muddy." We stopped a while in the city to recruit up a little, and I would like tell you of some scrapes that I and Big Bill got into but for the reason that it would occupy too much space, and besides Tom might probably find it out, and then it would bust me and my little expectation, into the deep recesses of eternity. But nevertheless, we had a most rattling good time of it during our sojourn in the city, but time traveled speedily, and it was not long till it warned us, that we had to make another sweep for our tour, with bold though sad stricken hearts, for mine though great, was not the only one in the crowd, we set out upon our far western journey; to seek our fate in a distant land, to try our hand on the wild rough rocks, and dive into hidden misteries of the wonders of the mountain caves and cliffs. We had not proceeded far on our journey, when we come into a settlement of Potawottama Indians, although we had not got entirely out of the white settlement, we did not know but these Indians were hostile, we had heard many tales of bloody deeds, and unmerciful carnages perpetrated by the scalp seeking villains, and began to feel as though we were entering into a land where extra care should be taken to preserve our upper extremities. Meanwhile we carrelled our wagons near one of their plantations, and was preparing to camp for the evening; we had to get water from their well, and some of the boys had went up and got some water but it was not fit for Indians to use, much less civilized whites; but our young lads were a fraid to say anything about it, lest the "reds"

might get mad at the whites and attempt a war or may be massacre and slaughter our whole crew, but presently it come for I and Big Bill to go for water; we went up and asked the old gentleman Indian, if he would be so accomodating as to allow us the privilege to partake of his fountain of fresh pure water; he feeling himself flattered a little, told us to help ourselves as long as there was a drop in the well, and struck out to go off somewhere; I don't know where, and perhaps you think 'tis no difference where; but before we got our water some of the young Indian bucks had gathered around the well and some more of our boys had come for more water, and was drawing it when I remarked to Bill that there was something in the water, and on examination we found hair, feathers, rags squirrel skins, and the Lord only knows what we didn't find in the water, and that set Bill right off on the start, he looked at one of the bucks and said what on God's earth have you had in your well, the young brave not liking such a salute, told him that they had not had anything in the well at all, and if he didn't like that water to "puckachee," but Bill was not so easy to be cut off in such away and said "I'll be gosh danged old feller if you don't want this bucket of slop in your face you had better shut up your gab, you gosh danged no'count onry redscoundrel," you may think you know something about how these young lads of ours were scared, and them being scared so bad, made the young Pota vott ima more milling to show his boldness he made one spring towards Bill and "ugh—egh" he went as Bill swabbed him from head to foot, with the water he still held in the bucket, this would have set the whole to thingin' of ferocious battle, had it not been for the old Indian coming up, just in time to stop his young brave sons from their desperate wrath. But we threw our water all out, and then the question was what would the Indians do, we had raised it with them, and we knew they was mad as hornets, and would be likely to seek revenge if they was like their red brothers, that we had read about—they would steal upon us, like a stealthy wolf, in our slumber and drive their tomahawks into our senses, and draw their scalping knives across our topnots, or else they might gather up, and surround our camp, and shoot us down one by

one, or take us all captives and then you all know what might be expected; scarcely had we come to our earnestest studies when we saw a wagon with as many dusky looking monsters as could hang on to it, and every one of them yelping and yelling like mad wolves; they come rolling and rattling as fast as their animals could draw them, till they got opposite our camp, and near to it as they could without leaving the road, stopped suddenly when one of them jumped out and started back and called out, loud as he could yell: "Now boys be sure you get everything ready, and don't forget to get 2 barrels of powder, and 2 barrels of sugar, and 2 barrels of whiskey, and 10 double barrelled shot guns, and I'll have everything ready." The great skulls of Glogotha! if ever you seen a set of scared chaps it was right there; they all turned white as my old hat, some of them groaned pitifully, others sighed deeply; but what was to be done? the town was but a few miles away, where they are supposed to be going, to lay in their murderous provisions. But would they come soon as ready or would they wait till late in the night, so to to more completely surprise us? or how would we make our escape? to load up and pull out was suggested by more than one, but was opposed by some; on account that we might run right in upon them, others would say that we could stand them off, others would say, there was enough reds to whip a whole regiment, and Big Bill said he be gosh danged, if he got a lick at that feller, that he had baptized, he would resurrect him, and make him over again; and I said nothing about it; because I knew that if we were in a land where wild savages was plenty, that we would all be captured and probably scalped but I did not really think that we had got so far out as to be in the midst of savages yet, and endeavored to appear brave as possible, under such uncertain circumstances. But however, fortunately for us, the young brigades that evidently had set out for some brave intentions, were so highly interrupted, they decided on having revenge, fell to drinking, and determined to fill themselves, perhaps got too much of the everdestroying material down them. Though not an eye in our company was closed that night, not the sound of a living being was heard; but when we arrived at the little village, we heard that they

had been there, and had got too drunk to leave town, and so we proceeded upon our course. without being molested by any one for a time, we had now got far upon the broad plains, and was begining to forget our fright about the water, where everything began to look more interesting than ever. We was not interrupted by anything particular, and was fast advancing upon the frountiers, where the primeval forest, streached toward the boundless wilderness — where the wigwam fire fumes and its flames, and smoke had not ceased their curling flights among the mighty boughs of the lofty pines; before the framing hand of civilization had constructed to any great degree its fertile soil into fields and meadows of horticultural beauty—where the rude barbarianism were slowly fading in the dying embers of hostility, and plunder. Yes we was far into the wild western world, and I began to make some preliminary speculations of my future anticipations. It was a lovely evening, and I for a little change of exercise from riding in the wagon, had taken a walk a few hundred paces behind the train, when many fancy visions began to present themselves to my imaginations; I was something like 3 or 4 hundred yards behind, walking upon a railroad that traversed our course, I saw a head of me a place, where it made a cut through a rise in the distance; there was a lad about 12, with me, we were walking along saying nothing to each other, while I was conjuring up within my own mind what bright prospects awaited me in the future, I could see my self, runing among the wild rocks hunting the precious metal that had already gladened the hearts of so many bold seekers, and now was I not as liable to do likewise. I had already advanced so far as to make my pile and return to my native land, in my imaginations, and there to meet my old friends and acquaintances and relatives, a rich and noble man—a gold speculator, oh; what happy thoughts; I could imagine the pleasures I would have, I would not have to be writing to girls; no they would swarm around me like buzzards round an old dead sheep because I was rich, had been away “west” had “fought” the “wolves” and the “Indians” and made a fortune, and come back to spend it on some pretty girl, but who would that girl be? Ah! I could imagine Mollie would call upon me and fall upon

her bended knees, and beg sincerely for pardon, and beseech me to allow her at best to be my——Hush! hark! what do I hear? bang, bang, peel on peel, went up like many thousand pieces of artillery, being all discharged in an instant, fire, fire; and still the roaring of shotguns, spencer-rifles, muskets, bulldozers, 22 pistols, and every instrument that could be made use of; was now put into service, I could almost hear the cries, shrieks, groans, and prayers of our brave hero band, as they held in tumultuous contest, and stood them at bay, and I could imagine I heard those yelps and yells of the great red braves, as they appeared to be dealing death in a dreadful manner, and "Wah—hoo," seemed to strike into my ear as I rushed to the spot and then what do you think I saw? a poor little didipper was lying in the edge of a puddle, shot into atoms; the boys were either trying their weapons, or else playing bully, I did not know which but the powder they burnt on that creature was larger than the duck by double its size. So I began to think that there was not an Indian on the plains; however we got near the destination of some of our crew, when the whole party bursted, and every man took his own course, Bill had stopped far back on the road at a stock ranch, and I and the man I had started with was left alone, far away from civilization; no one near, oh what a lovely place; nothing to be seen but the wild fleeting wolf and the fugitive antelope; occasionally a herd of buffalos would come in sight, away in the distance, which we could scarcely tell from Indians. No wood, no water, no feed for our poor horses, save what little time they got to gnaw the earth for a little buffalo grass, which was not longer than the hair on a sheep's nose. While we was thus plodding upon our lonely way, and viewing the gloomy retrospection now before us we was again aroused to our utter conscienciousness. Jim was walking behind the wagon, and I driving, he discovered a group in the distance which looked like men on horses, he gazed with intent earnestness upon the group, which seemed to be nearing us very rapidly, he then come around and told me that it certainly was "engines" I told him I thought it was buffalos, but they drew nearer and finely they come on top of a rise in the distance which showed plainly that it was men of some descrip-

tion my old black coat and calico britches, how I felt when Jim come round in front with his old broad brimed hat in his hand and said "it is engines by doggy its engines," now for it; to get out of sight was then imposible, I felt like the 4 ends of creation were about to fall together upon us, and crush us in to eternity. I heard Jim behind the wagon offering up his mightiest solemn supplications, and begging for Massa's sakes ah! my old provider of everything thats good, I have lost my scalp at last, but for massa sakes do provide some chance for Luce and her poor children. I might a knowed better n to come away here in this land of engines, but its too late to squeal now, but oh! have mercy on me for I did steal that sack of hog's joles and a sack of shorts, right out of old Sam's smoke house and he suffered for it, but I'll not do it any more, so I won't; don't let them engines ride ole Jule too much, and oh how I wisht I was back on ole grand river, where engines is not there take care of Luce and Dave an' Susie an' Billy, an' ah—uh—eh here they come onto us now right here." A little closer and we discovered that they were white men, hunting buffalos. Poor Jim; if ever you seen a happy man on the broad plains it was him; he jumped higher than a rooster with his head off, yelled louder than an alligator hunting for a dead negro; slapped his hands louder than a rattle-trap, laughed louder than a negro at a coonfight, and cut more capers than a gander in a hogpen I could laugh at his delight myself, because I could not help but feel a little pleased myself. Now, as I have told you 3 Indian tales, and only one of them had an Indian in it, perhaps you are getting tired of Indian tales; but this is my last with them now. We traveled on without any more difficulty until we reached our place appointed to stop awhile, we stopped there and Luce as Jim called her, poor woman, her desease was too much for her strength, and her trip was too long and fatiguing to surmount its hardships, and three days later the poor woman was brone away into that land where her soul no sorrow knoweth. Then I must take my course alone, for Jim and his three children had to stay at his brother-in-laws, and I must seek my destiny as best I could; I traded my horse and harness to a book agent for a watch, and took my course alone,

I have already told you enough times, how I felt, and now was as deep a time as I had ever experienced; not withstanding the hardships I had already underwent, I proceeded; and came to a ranch about 4 miles from where I had bid my friend adieu, stopped and went into the yard, there was some men fixing up to start back to the very same country where 6 weeks before I had started from, I endeavored to get into their company, but could not make the "riffle," they would have taken me quick enough if their convenience would admitted, but it would not, so I was left out, but while we were talking the boss of the ranch came out and told me to come in and have dinner; niggers and nutmegs! how that surprised me, to know that he was so much of a man, but here let me say if ever you should visit the Esland Ranch, Elbert Co, Colo., you will be apt to meet 2 as kind hearted men as ever graced the sands of Colo. Whose names are France, and Alexandria Judy; for here was a time to test their kindness—for I was a stranger and they took me in, I was hungry and they fed me," on buffalo, antelope, jack rabbits, beef, and 'taters, one whole long winter for no pay, nor would they charge me a cent—nothing but what little choring they had to do, which was nothing compared to a winter's fare in that place. I stayed there until the latter part of winter, when Alex. was going back east, near my old home, and said he would take me free of charge, if I desired to go. Although regretting to leave my new friends, I thankfully accepted his kind offer, and one fine morning in February, we were sailing down the eastern slope of Colorado. Nothing disturbed our ride for several hundred miles. We had been on the train about three days, when one evening a new Conductor entered the train, to take up his duty—receiving tickets and fare—when he came around and called for my ticket, I told him that I had a pass. He asked what kind of a pass. I told him I had a cow-pass, and if he knew what a "pass" was, he knew what kind it was. He said they didn't take any passes on that train, and told me to get off at the next station. I told him that I would stay on as long as there was a wheel on her track. He then brought the brakesman and told him to put me off. I reached around beside me, and drew out my old "coar'er" and

told him if he wanted to smell burnt powder, or hear bullets sing, or caps burst, to go ahead. By this time Alex. came and told the Conductor that he had obtained the pass from the general agent, for the amount of stock he shipped, and, squashed it.

Now, what d'ye say? I say so too! Three leather tea kettles, two gauze bellows, one calico hog trough—drive my nose into my head will ye?



CHAPTER III.

My Gal Tom, or Mary Ann's Letter.

AIR—Good bye, You've busted My Patc.

Now pleasure and happiness to me once more,
My sorrow has ceased—I suffer no more;
How happy and contented will I become,
When I have conquered my own dear Tom.
But, oh! what troubles are yet in store,
For those who imagine that theirs are all o'er;
But now 'tis done, my heart is dead,
And you might just as well blow off my head!

BILLY TAD-TOLE.

Now reader, what do you say about it anyhow, I mean what I have told in the two preceeding chapters, I think I know what you think, it must be improved before you give it much more attention, I will promise, after this chapter is completed, to try and do better. But cannot give much in the way of interest until it is, this is a clearing of conscience, in order to give you a clean sweep when I get there you see. You recollect Mollie; don't you? I guess you ought, the little queen, well what do you think I found out when I got back again? I found that she was to be married, to one of the ugliest looking lanky shanked knock-kneed; slim legged crooked nosed, slick-headed, slim jawed, white-eyed, pitiful looking wretches, that any human ever saw, you recollect old Sol, the tattler, don't you? well, this was one of his many sons. And when I come to study the thing over I concluded that if she would throw away so nice a little woman as she was, on such a miserable miscreant as he was, that I would not mourn her loss no longer, yes, she really did get married to that wretched, miserable, monkey, ape, baboon, or what ever you would be a mind to call him. And old Sol, bought them a piece of lime rocks, old logs, frogs ponds, brush

hollors, and jack-oak bushes on a credit, and owes for it yet I guess, and so that ended it with me and Mollie, but it didn't stay ended. No, would to the great master that it had ended it; me, or something else, but no; I must alway be tormented with that wonderful punishment from which none can be delivered, that horrifying torture that none can feel, save those that are pierced with cupid's painful arrow. Well I was getting pretty well broken off from the thoughts of Mollie, when one of my nieces, wanted me to go with them to a little hoe-down, in the village, in which my brother lived, I was always ready to go with them, because they was in a croud of good company, and we was off to our old friend Seer's to see them have a frolic, it had not proceeded far, until I happened to see a little girl dancing with a great big black-smith, and oh Mol! Oh how I did shiver from my toe nails to my top-not. I was determined to make that gal's acquaintance, I tried every known remedy, I told two girls that if they would tame that girl for me, I would buy them more candy than would give a turkey buzzard the dyspepsia, and they told her mamma what I said, and I don't know what she said, but every body in town was talking, and telling her mama what I had said, and what I hadn't said and what I wouldn't say, and what I never said, and kept it up until they had her so mad, she wouldn't let me speak to her little "Tom" girl; whether Tom was her real name, or whether it was a derivative of some fictitious name, I am unable to tell but they call her Tom any how, and that name to-day, though hundreds of miles away, and may never see them charming dark eyes, them beautiful curls, that sweet little chubby maiden, that name strikes like a rising sensational feeling, that heaves in my massive chest, like a great gorge of ice, breaking up some frozen stream. Yes, long did I try in vain, to get an opportunity or something of the kind, just any way to find out if I could have any thing to say to her, but could do nothing, or say nothing, because I had done just like I always did when I found one that I was smitten about, I always done some fool trick to spoil it, well I done it this time any how; I'll tell you some time what it was, but must go ahead and tell how badly I got stuck about her first. I had a little niece, about her size

and I would get Rosa to get "Tom" to come to my sister's house, and then I'd steal a little courting, out of her by piece meals, until I got to loving her as dear as I could love any one on earth, and I would buy her doll babies and such play things as she wanted. Oh mercy on me how I loved that little one; perhaps, you think me more of a fool than anything else, loving such a little girl as that, but she was not as little as I have made her out; tis true she was small, when I first saw her but she grew into a good size girl before I spoiled it. She was beautiful, and I thought I could persuade her to like me if I was let alone, but I wasn't; for everybody had something to do, or say; some would tell her to not have anything to say to me, some would tell things that I had not said, some this, some that, tattling and telling lies, sneering, and everything; and any thing, that could be done, was done to work against me and my Tom, oh! if you could see her like I seen her, you would not blame me for liking her. For on June the 24th, the great Anniversary of Masonic Honors; when the wise and God-like Free Masons, the friend and Father to the orphan, the great benefactor and comfortor of the poor and forlorn; they to whom all christendom, should gather together and erect a monument of honor, to their God-like Fraternity, were gathering together to celebrate their time honored day, in a little grove near the village, where my life's greatest joys are within. And there while the swinging ticket sellers were a howling like wolves for the carcass of dead negro, for the sale of their tickets, the lemonade, and candy-venders were screaming like mad-cats on a house top, the monte-banks, the wheels of fortune, or misfortune or mr. fortune or mrs. fortune which ever you are a mind to call them, I always found them to be wheels of misfortune, because I always missed a fortune on anything; anyhow they were all making more noise than six half hounds after a polecat, bleating louder than a drove of sheep, when you pass them with a tin bucket on your arm, and while they were braying, brawling and yelling, I happened to see "Tom" standing on her knees right before her sister, I had bought a ticket to swing and oh! how I felt to see her there with her sister, who I thought wouldn't let her talk with me. I thought I'd try and give her

the ticket and see what she'd say, but then I was afraid her sister would set up a confusion, and probably rail on me, for trying to be familiar with her little sister. But she did not, no thanks to that alwise head and kind heart, who freed my heart from a heavy burden, no she did not object to me giving the ticket to "Tom" and told her to accept it and thank me for it. But I am taking up too much time, telling you about something you don't want to hear, and must get a little further on with my tale. You see I had to be up and traveling off some where, just like I always am, when I have no business. but I done it anyhow. I went south bought a lot in a big watering-place of a town, went into the candy and lemonade business, sold goods at auction done this and that, got broke a time or two, it would be useless to say what all I did or didn't do. During all that time I never had a letter out of the mail bags, whether she couldn't or wouldn't write, I cannot say, but she never sent me the track of pen, or a foot-print of a pencil, nor the stamp of a goose quill, if I had room to spare, or time to write. I would give some of the various kind I wrote to her, but will give you one further on that will end this chapter. Yes like an old woman writing to her daughter I looked long for a letter but received none, till finally my Father handed me a great big envelope, with two sheets of paper in it as big as sheepskins, long as a board bill, broad as a barn door, and stiff as a starched shirt on a hot day. I did not know of any mortgages, deeds of trust, bills of sale, or bundle of papers like that, due me, but I thought it would give me a good job to do; to read it that evening. I opened it, and examined the signature. Queen Victoria and crabapples! Lord, save me from ever having to feel like I felt then: I felt like my time was up, and this was my death-warrant. It was signed "Tomie F——" I commenced trying to read it. You may think I am exaggerating, but I've got them rolled up in a bundle and hanging on a joist in my cabin now. Want of time, prevents a full description; but will give a part: it started like this:

deer (Alehue Shackelfoote) eye wont to e u sow bad. eye wuze thinkine how bad iyed lyke toe sea ewe tyll i thoyt ied wright tow yew aund cea if I kuldent heere frum eaw. Yue wrougte at yu waunted two teell mea soumpthen, aund eaf yion dough yeu kin wrycht ite teon mey. oure—(if yew wylle ceandd mewe

ny wne dollarze wil ille Cume Doughwn tharre aude spynde thewy fourght ull
gule lie wyhte Yeugh ey've gout thee hodake.

Gracious goodness; I fell down and rolled over, like a horse with the colic; I groaned like a woman dying with toothache; drew my breath like a locomotive trying to run over a soaped track; sweated like a negro in a hemp patch; panted like a dog in a snake fight, and tears run down my face like slop in a hog pen! I knew what was the matter, I knew too, that "Tom" did not write such stuff, and that she did not want to see me bad enough to send me such talk. I knew some one was playing the old satan, and trying filch a little "dust" out of me. Now you want to know what I done. You know that I was pretty apt to do something, and I fancied myself as shrew in the way of trickeries as any of my would-be beaters; so I fixed up a letter right off, and sent it to the one I thought had done the work—but I had to find out for certain, that it was not "Tom," so I wrote to a friend, a true and dear friend she was for she wrote just what I wanted to know—the most desirable thing that I have ever known since. I fixed up a letter, some bills that I had made for the purpose, and a check like this:

Mr. J. A. B.,—Pay to bearer of this check—Mary Ann Dogskin—the sum of Nywne Dollars, and charge it to the Sheep-Thief Company; and this shall be your receipt. Signed, J. B.—President. David C.—Vice President

I also fixed up a small note and put in, then I wrote a letter of which the following is a part:

My Dear Mary Ann Dogskin :—How like the fangs of the Serpent, the breath of the adder, and the tail of the black snake, that impresses upon the charm of their victim, did your letter impress me. Oh! when I think of you, how my haert does flip-it-a-flop, like a wet sheet on a clothes line; and my big sad heart thumps against the walls of my noble manly breast, like a billy goat butting at a barn door. Yes, when I think of that beautiful nose of yours, and think how much it resembles a big red sugar beet, or the inside of a peeled cow's horn, or a good sized buzzard's head, my mind whizzes and buzzes and fizzes, like a multitude of bees in a tar bucket. Your eyes are fair and white as the transformation of a rabbit, by the mastification of a dog's teeth; your lips are as sweet as a rotten pawpaw, and looks as nice as a defunct oyster. Your voice is as charming as the last sound of the dinner horn. Your form as beautiful as an old sway backed, one eyed, knock-kneed, no tailed, plain ribbed mare. You are sweeter than flap-jacks, Johnny cakes, rye busecut, or risen bread with pumpkin on it; yes, you are better than roasin' ears, cabbage soup, roast "coon," baked 'possum, stewed mush-rooms or fried bull frogs. Oh! if I could gain your good idea of me, I would be happy as a coon in a grape patch, or a 'possum in a persimmon tree, or a hungry dog in a pot of mush. I am so sorry to hear of you having the headache; but apply that hot air remedy, and I'm satisfied it will give you relief—you know I sent you the prescription in another place.

CHAPTER, IV.

SHOW ON HOG CREEK, ⁵ HOW TO CUT A MAN'S HEAD OFF AND
PUT IT ON A PLATTER.

AIR:—*Eh, dat watch millen Gal.*

The art of magic it now is here,
And I must seek some plan
And to make myself great I don't fear.
Myself, to play my own hand.
The water melons are coming in,
And sumptuous times with them are had;
But oh! that they had never been,
To make me feel so very bad.

Chorus, OH, DOT GALENIPPER.

I had concluded to give you a much longer history of my youthful unhappiness, before entering upon my long and sorrowful life and seclusion in the back-woods of Arkansas, and, have concluded to give you some of my unfortunate practice, before entering upon my entire performances in that rude State. You will readily perceive that the letter business, has completely ruined me in love affairs, forever. For, without any more exaggeration, or foolishness about it, I did love that little girl to the destruction of my entire feelings and affections for any one upon this great earth; no matter how fair, how beautiful, how good, or how friendly; never have I seen one that awakened in me, the feelings of love. Nor never do I expect to. But I have run my course. I have played my part, in the drama of love, and must seek some other source. Anything that would amuse, interest, or that would make this slow world pass more easily by, and afford a half-way endurance, was what I wanted to do or get into. I had tried many things, and wanted to try something new; something I had never done before, and something that would admit of occasional travel, as that was always my greatest pancea, and I must do something that would be useful and amuse others. I was not particular on my own part; but I wanted to benefit others. It was too late to undertake the profession of medicine, and that would require a local practice, and would have to confine myself to one locality. I had already tried the mercantile business, had done a great many things, and many great things in my youthful days, and I thought it would be hard to find something that I had not done. I thought I would read some books that I had, before I decided on any certain thing, or before I left the place. Among the rest, there was one book that rather took my at-

tention. I read it, until I became greatly interested in it. It was a great work disclosing the hidden secrets and mysteries of MAGIC. I thought what a great thing it would be, to be able to perform the many tricks of despection and prestidigitation; the wonderful feats of black, white, spotted or any other magic, that might be performable. I thought of the startling revelations of obtruse, shadowy, and intricate operations of the magical powers, which is ignored by the learned, and abused by the ignorant; but which is, nevertheless, as positive and potent in its effects as Magnetism or Electricity. Would-be wiseacres sneer at the supernatural; but it was a real witch that showed her dread visage to Saul at Endor; it was a real ghost that made the Stoic Butus quake in his tent at mid-night; it was a real cross that dazzled the eyes of Constantine, and led him to victory. The wisest of the Egyptians, the Greek, the Romans, and the Gouls, firmly believed in the powers of certain persons to fore tell the future—to bon and bles; by their conjurations and adjurations. The truth is, talk as we may, in our festive and idle moments, the electric cord, “with which we are darkly bound,” receives a shock, whenever we think seriously about such mystic subjects as the magical mysteries. I studied the hidden researches of the conjuror, the magician and the wonderful influences with which they held, spell-bound, their audiences; thought how sublime a thing it would be, to call together the whole population of some great village, and then, to amuse and interest as well as to surprise, with supernatural and seeming impossible wonders. To rise in distinction; to soar high in the world of art, in flying from State to State, from city to city, and from continent to continent, as the most gifted magician in the world’s choicest selection; and, could also see myself, after I had performed all the feats and wonders known to magical science, besides what I had invented and performed them throughout the world, and now, must form and start out a magnificent circus and managrie. Could see myself in the “Zoological Garden,” selecting the animals, and purchasing the lordly elephant, the noble Asiatic lion, the orang-outang, gorilla, ape, monkey, and bob-tailed mule for the clown to ride. Here, in fine spirits of my future anticipa-

tions, I commenced my work. I commenced with little, like all great men, only to conquer contention and opposition, and then to rise despite of all opposite efforts. I had concluded to commence with a "Sleight-of-Hand Show," which I could start with very little out-lay, as I was almost an expert myself, in devising and making many kinds of tricks, and traps, and works that could be profitably employed in the "trick shows," and soon went to work, "trying my own hand," on the manufacture of some of the many and various tricks to get up a show. It must be borne in mind, that, although I have to give rules and directions for some of the tricks performed, in order to give a better description of the performances; still, 'tis not intended as a true guide to the art of magic and mystery: however, I was not long in making preparations to construct a few for a commencement. I first undertook the conjuror's banquet, or wizard's supper :

Wherein he eats a quantity of paper shavings and draws from his mouth a barber's pole six feet long, yards of ribbons, and other articles. I procured the necessary material, and went at it like a fox in a herd of geese, or a nigger in a bowl of clam soup. I took some stiff paper, cut it into strips about three inches wide, (for the barber's pole) pasted the ends together, until it was long enough to reach around six of the fatest old wenches in the town; painted a stripe half an inch wide; made a knob of wood; pasted the end of the paper to the round knob, so as to roll on to it, and leave the red side out, which when drawn to six or seven feet, it would remain in a round shape, and resemble a striped barber's pole. I then fixed up the paper shavings and ribbons, and other articles. I then made the ring rings, to pass through my cheek. I got two common iron rings; cut one of them, and spread it apart, so as to admit of its purpose and left the other whole. I made the doll trick, the card trick, the burned handkerchief trick, the whisky and sponge trick, and hundreds of other trickical tricks—and to cap the climax of total depravity, I made the trick and properties to "cut a man's head off, and place it on a platter a yard from his body." Before I got done with it, I would have been willing to go through the operation in earnest. I got some boards, newspapers and mucilage, and went to work. I made a box for the man to lay on; then I made a place for his head to pass through : then I prepared a stand table, with a hole fixed in the top, so that a man's head could pass up through it : then I had to make a curtain or cover for the box and table, and it was about the middle of August, and as hot as the times of a political campaign. I worked and sweated, puffed and twisted, grunted and hurried. In the meantime, I laid down my tools, and went to get something or other, and when I came back, there was a crowd of girls where I had been at work, for owing to the warm weather, I had taken the shade of a large tree for my workshop, and these girls, though grown, and all of them yawning for beaux, and big enough to know better than to be manipulating in such a careless manner, the tricks of a conjuror : and notwithstanding the extra carefulness, that needs be taken with such, they had torn up my box, cut up my papers, knocked over my mucilage, lost my tools, and scattered everything easter-westerly and crooked. Tad-pole soup and Moll Robison ! if I wasn't mad, you can poke me in the eye with a boot-jack. This being mad, done about as much good as sawing your nose with a gourd handle. For they all put at me to

go up in town and buy some water melons; but I was not in much of a humor for eating water melons. I went to work, trying to get things square, until they all scattered out but two of the best ones, and gradually my wrath wore down a little, and I told them that if they would not be so rude, and not have the whole town running after us, I would buy all the water melons they wanted, but I told them that we would have to leave town and take a walk. And I would get the melons and my partner, we would be off. I had been very busy, and thought a walk in the country, a mess of water melons, and an evening's talk with the *gals* would be interesting. I was late in finding the one I wanted to share in the chivalry. I had purchased the fluidy fruit for the treat; they were about the size of three or four dogs' heads, and as heavy as a sack full of hog's heads, and unhandy to carry as arm full of cat fish. When I got back I found that there was two other fellows there, who had the same kind of fruit that we had, and was slipping around to keep us from knowing what was going off; but I saw what was up. I saw that they was tired waiting on me, and had concluded to try other agency. But thought I, if you take a mess of them melons, you'll pay for the roast. Strange as it may appear, while were coming along with our ox load, seeking for a place to deposite them, we ran into a pile of melons as big as tater holes. Soon as we found out what was going to be done, I told my pard, that if we didn't have some fun, he might take my nose for clothes poker. I told my pard to stay there and watch till I came back. We had stowed ours away, and I went to the house to tell the girls to be ready as soon as I got back, but they didn't say much about it. The would-be rivals had went up in town, to replenish the inner man, and I made good my return, with enough lobelia to turn a dog's stomach wrong side in, or to choke a dead negro. They had made an incision into them, to examine their excellence. I removed the scardification, tilted the emulical substance into the cavity, and replaced the piece removed, and then told my pard to follow me. We secreted ourselves in a patch of green polk weeds hard by, and was not long in being relieved. We supposed they would walk down the road; but as it was getting cooler in the evening, they came and seeped themselves close to us, and began their butchery. The larks who had intended to play us so foul, had too much swill down their throats to know whether they was eating water melons or drinking dish water. But like the "rich man," they fared sumptuously for awhile at least. Meanwhile, we were anxious to see how it would work. We could hear them chee-hee-hee-in' and effee-na-ha-in' and telling how slick they had pulled it over Shackelcoote. One said "George, nump, nump, begone darn, if we did-didn't scree nump too mean, yuh-yes, Bill, we did, we did play reynard on 'em, if I know it." The girls said "he was too stingy to buy anything, and it wasn't no difference." Presently they commenced grunting and twisting, their eyes looked like those of the one that bellows in July, their nose spread like the adder; their mouths opened like doors of a prison, and great strings of froth streamed out like sour sorgum juice. George said, "um, um, Bill, I b'leve we're pisened." "So do I boss." They were all rolling, groaning, and with something like the dashing in of a house top, commenced uh, eh, uh, hac, almost simultaneously. Hog skins and hosses collars, wasn't it fun to see 'em waller? We slid out from where we had been so secretly encoached, leaving the poor sufferers to recuperate as best as they could. One thing made this transaction over important with me, it happened on the same day of my first performance. Now, we had to make a start, and on account of the "gal brigade," we had considerable fixing to do. But succeeded in getting all things in readiness, and not forgetting our melons, we loaded up, and started to an old log school house, some six or eight miles from town, to try our luck. We had a two horse wagon, and as much plunder in it as two miles could wag with. We arrived at the place later than a showman likes to, but having everything in proper shape, and being four of as large men as there was in the place, (at least we thought so,) we soon had things up in shape, and did not have to wait long for a good crowd of boys, girls, women, men, children, dogs, negroes, and everything in the shape of humanity. We had the tricks, traps and institutions scattered in every direction, and about

half ready to receive the audience. They gathered around the door like green flies around a beef's head, eager to see what was going to come off. We announced the doors open; but they stood back like bashful boys at a frolic. They said for "some one to make the start," they "was afraid it was a fraud." I declared it was going to be a real performance; that I was going to show some real wonders, when an old covey came up, and said, "You, are you all the one ats har?" I told him that I was enough. "You, you're no showman; it takes somebody to git down on a carpet, and squirm like a ground hog in a steel trap. Come on boys, let's go home, if he's all tha's no show. I've knowed him these past fifty years, and never was a showman, nor nothin' else." How I wanted a squaring up with him. But they did not trust the old hog—they had come to see a show, and if possible, they intended to see it. Bill was taking care of the mules, Henry was trying to persuade them into the show, I was busy as an old maid trying to catch a flea, getting things replaced, and Jasper was behind the curtain, occasionally taking a swig from his flash, when one lunkhead of a fellow came up and said he wanted to see what we had in there. Van, we called him that for short, told him it was 25 cents for admission. He said he had no "chink" but Van said it took money to cut'er. Not being pleased with such an familiarity, he concluded to come in without paying. He made a spring past Van, and darted in. I made for him, but could find nothing but a broom. I grabbed it up, but knew I could do nothing without something else attached. Van was looking for something, and Jasper had just crawled from behind the curtain. By this time the house was full of boys, men, negroes, and making as much fuss as a disturbance in a bumblebee's nest. We had a coal oil lamp half full of oil. I knew something in the way of a scare had to be resorted to, and I tilted the contents of the lamp on the brush of the broom, and holding the lamp still blazing, in one hand, I touched it to the greased broom brush, and went on 'em. I slashed first one way and then the other, until I had them all blistered and out they went, howling like a woman with a snake after her; jumping and yelling—ganders in a flight couldn't imitate them. Soon as the house was cleared, I soused my instrument of woe, in a bucket of water, and thus the battle ended. Now, what another fix I'm in. Can't help it; here we are, seven miles from home, and dark 'ner a pile of black cats. Although they were singed about the eye brows and ears, still they wanted to see the show—the feat of "how to cut a man's head off;" and said "if we'd not act the tarnal fool, and have a show, that they would pay their way in, and behave themselves." All was agreed, and every critter paid their quarter, and took seats as earnest as if they was at "camp-meeting." They must see the capital trick first, "man slaughter in the nineth degree," as they called it. I dusted around as if I was going to open the ring for a circus; got my big long box out,—big enough to make Samson a coffin—and my stand on which to sot the head of the degenerated; had Bill to lay on the box; and Jasper to crawl under the stand—this stand had to be placed near the curtain, so as to pass under without being observed. I took up my big knife, made of tin, which in the lamp light, shone like a peat'er basin before a winter fire; and secured my sponge full of poke berry juice, and said: "Ladies and Gentlemen: Scarcely in a country this side of Heathendom would such amusement as I am about to perform, be admitted, much less fought for, and looked upon with eagerness, by a civilized community"—one one hissed and I began to think what I was saying. However, I took up the first job of the kind in my life. I took a newspaper, placed it over Bill's head, and took up my monster looking knife, and began sawing on Bill's swart like a cook on a beef steak. He groaned pitifully, and I rolled the paper like a cape like I had a hornets nest in it, and shoved Bill's head down through the hole in the box; fixed the papers around his neck, and with the artificial blood, streaming off the big knife, I laid the imaginary head upon the stand, and moved the paper on it, and had Jasper to "poke" up his head through the hole made in the platter, drew the paper snugly around and said: Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, here is the wonderful feat, as performed in London. Anyone who can look up in this scene, without feeling a sense of horror and emotion, is a stout heart.

el creature and should be appointed as assistant in some military hospital. This adair created a deep interest in the minds of the people to see something more, so after placing the paper back over Jasper's head, and causing him to detract it beneath, and slide out, I again rolled up the paper, just as if I had the head in it, put it back over Bill's head again and said: by the hoky-poky's ceremonies now live. Bill drew a long breath and raised up. Then for wizard's supper. I prepared the shavings, the pole, and so on, and went at it again. Ladies and Gentlemen: doubtless you have witness many gluttons; but, perhaps, have never saw one who possessed the extraordinary ability to devour as much provisions as I. "I see," says I, that the cook in sending my supper, has made a fearful mistake, and sent me a basket of waste paper; but if you will excuse the vulgarity, will make my supper out on the paper." All was willing to allow me the privilege to enjoy the pleasure of a hearty supper, and I began crammin' them down me, like a dutchman making sour kraut; but in putting one wad in my mouth, I took out the one I had chewed. While I was getting them pretty well taken in, I raised, among some of the paper, the pole, made a few jirks, as if something was in it, and holding one hand to my mouth, give a pull, and out came the barber's pole, then the ribbons &c. That was extremely interesting. Next was the ring trick. This you remember was a cut iron ring, and a solid one, both just alike. I handed the solid one around for examination, and being pronounced solid by the company, I told them that I was going to pass that ring through my mouth and one side of my cheek, and then knock it on to a stick I procured a paper, placed the ring secretly over the stick, held it in my hand, and told two of the company to hold each end of the stick. I took the opened ring, put it in my mouth so as to allow the end to stick close to my face, so it would look like a solid ring passed through my cheek. They took hold of the ends of the stick, and said they'd keep it from goin' on, if it raised 'em out'en their boots. Presently I give a quick jerk, and whizz went the ring on the stick. Many other similar tricks I performed, which was equally interesting, and admired by them. Then thanking them for their kind and untiring attention, and liberal patronage, and at the same time expressing my sorrowful regret for the injury I had unthoughtedly done them, and bade them good night. We had to replace everything, load up and pull for home. We left our water melons in the wagon and expected to eat them while going home; but we found that some thoughtful villians had ransacked our wagon and devoured them. We reached home towards day-break, sleepy, and tired, with seven dollars to pay for four men's work, \$3.00 worth of paper and coal oil, water melons, and—St. Patrick couldn't ten what all. Hold-on—hand me a gound with a little suppawn in it; grease my ears with coon skins, frizzle me under the nose with a fox tail, pour my pockets full of lish water, peel my pate with a rollin' pin, reel nose with an oyster shell, if I didn't feel bespotted, and bespeckled, "John Anderson, My Joe John."

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CHAPTER, V.

Shacklefoote's Show at Elm Flat.

AIR:—*The Showman's Colission.*

The band is ringing proudly,
Out on the still night air;
And Signor Carl howls loudly,
For his show at Robbin's so rare,
But oh! they all are on my side,
My own friends blows the horn;
And here amid such flattering pride,
The crowd is to me borne.

THE SNOOZER.

SINCE I have recovered from the loss of sleep, bad feelings of exertion over the water melon scrape, the fiery battle, and travels in the dark, I will tell you something better about it. The show and its influences, and the weather being unusually hot, had not as much influence over me, as did the water melon scrape, although I will pass it by—for I would not have anyone to know who those gals were, for the price of a crop of melons. Now, I must go about to get up another show. I did not desire to commence in town, until I got more practice, and therefore commenced hunting in the country—in the most rural part—to see about getting a school cabin for I thought that was a good locality for a trick show. I found the old foggy who had the most to do with it, and asked if it could be obtained to hold a little elaboration in, or something of the kind. “What do you call lobberashun or sumthun of the kind?” I told him “that was rather a ficticious name, I mean a show, an exhibition.” “Well, if you mean a show, why don’t you say it? who knows what you mean by a ficticious name, or a extrabi-shun?” I then asked him, if I could have the use of it to have a show in. “Well, I guess not. What kind of a trap of a show have you got?” I told him I didn’t have a trap of a show, I had a trick of a show! “Well,” said he, “if that’s the kind of a show you’ve got, I’ll take care that you don’t trick me with it.” I tried to argue the case, but it was no go, and I had to “gin’er” up. I concluded to go to some little town, and try it there. There was going to be a ball, in a mill-town of a place, some ten miles up the river. As there was a crowd going from our town, I thought I would go up, and see what the chance would be, for a round at my profession. I saw the driver of the team and made arrangements to go. Had everything fixed up in style, and off we go. We got there pretty late, saw things a boomin’. The hall was illumined like Hammerslough’s electric lighted rooms, heard the organ howling like a hungry wolf on a sandy desert; saw the b’hoys and g’hals, with glossy shirts and broad-axe collars, and peggin’ awl heeled boots, beaver hats and other marks of nobility. The ball opened, the flashing lamps flickered their radiant light on its walls. The ladies came swarming in like “yaller jackets,” with their linen and calico.

The lion hearted young men from the Grand River brakes, was gathering in like negroes to a "co'n shuckin'." The music began, and I swooned away. Oh! I thought, if I had to come out before those pretty gals, and commence trying to show. It had been told to one of my friends, that I had my "traps" with me, and if I could get a room, that I would have a show. "Cuss" the one that told it, for he was the most influential man in the "Heel"—a blacksmith—and, don't you recollect where I first seen "Tom" dancing with a blacksmith? Well, this was a Smith, but not Jim Smith, no, a nicer man fifteen to seven. I knew that he would be after having me to try my "grit" on that crowd. I thought that I would make my disappearance about the time he got ready to call upon me. I was busily engaged, feasting my eye on the pretty gals, and my ear on the rich music, some one in the "mess" remarked they was tired, and suggested that all take a little rest. I knew that Joe would call upon me pretty soon. Oh, how I did wish that I could find a hole and crawl into it, and stop it with my great big toe! While I was thus meditating, I concluded to play a little possum with him. I crouched down in an out-of-the-way place, and commenced snoring like a cat on a warm hearth stone. I heard some one call for "that show, Joe, that was going to come off." I heard Joe call for "Shacklefoote." I laid still as a lad in a water melon patch, till he came 'round and gave me a shake like a cross woman does her pard, when he u sets her soap kettle. He told me to give them a little show, while they were ready to look on. I thought if I never had a show, till I gave one before such a fine gathering as that, I would plunge my tricks into the river, and swear myself out of the profession. I told him that I had left the most of my tricks, and had forgotten my curtains. I got off slicker than I expected to. You may imagine that I congratulated myself on getting off so well. We packed up next morning and returned home. I was almost at an end what to do or where to go for another undertaking. I tried several school houses, but could get none. Some told me they didn't want any "munkey shows traveling through their country, to teach their children vice and sin, and rob them of their weasel skin. I was getting quite weary, when one

morning while passing through town, I saw some flowery show bills placed in different places over town. They announced that Sig. Carl, would give a grand exhibition in "the flat" that evening. Every one in the town was please to think they was going to have a fine time. Everybody was interested, and every one was going, and I went too. I wanted to see how Sig managed the thing. He done well in getting a crowd; but folks was not as well pleased as Sig. was, for he made it pay well enough to decide on trying agin the next night. The boys here was always ready to get up confusion or set some off in madness.

Some of the boys proposed for me to get permission of the hall, and have a show the same night of Sig's just for the fun of the thing, and I consented. The whole set was in for it, and the boys helped me in getting the hall, posted bills and made me feel bigger than Samson's twin sister. The "Honorable Cornet Band" was at my service, and every member was int rested in the affair, and displayed great anxiety to see Carl beat. I thought as I had done passably well in my first attempt, I thought I might do as well this time, by the help of a natural ventriloquist and a Silver Cornet Band that would grace the Sells' Circus. You may think that I am speaking in eulogistic praise of the band, because they were going to toot for me, but I only speak of the custom with which this band always treated any respectable concert, or lecturer that visited their village. And procuring necessary articles we commenced for performance in a short time. Sig. Carl was located in the front room of Mr. Robins' building on Front street, facing the lane and cornfield, my place of coming together, was around towards the post office, in the loft of a plow house,—they called it an "agricultural hall"—and I thought before I got through that it was a haul sure enough for I hauled about three car loads of plows, hoes, harrows, and Jack Robison couldn't tell what I didn't haul out of it. The hauling done, something else had to be done or Sig. would get the crowd, for he was howling like a starved hound for a beef's shank. The town was lighted to its brightest splendor, and the whole population was walking the hog path streets, burying me to get ready quick, or Sig'll get 'em all. The band was braying like herd of mules and the crowd was gathering around Sig's door. I came out and squalled at the top of my quenzical force: Harken unto my call, big, little, one and all. March to the City Hall. The band marched for the haul, and as sure as nine and another 'ne is half a score, they hauled the crew after them, as I had forgotten to have a door keeper. Now what another mess I'm in, the band roating, the best violinists in the country, second to none, save Ole Bull, the finest young ladies; and—eh, dat watch melon girl was there; the merchants, druggists, doctors, lawyers, men women, and children. Now what was to be done? I was into it this time like snakes in a soap barrel. I couldn't get out this time, I was like the sow that was washed, and returned again to the wallowing in the mire; why didn't that Negro Heel scrape give me warning? why didn't my friends tell me of the coming danger? I thought of everything in an instant, except some way to get out of it. They were yelling for "Shackelfoote to come to the front." The ventriloquist was behind the curtain, waiting for for me to get through with my tricks. I could think of no trick to commence with, nor of nothing to say. I went to thinking harder than a mule could kick, and thought of something to do! to jump out of the window and kill myself? No it wasn't that either. I remembered how brave and fearless George and Bill had butchered the water melons without the fear of man or reproach of woman, and I concluded to do likewise. I told Mr. Colman, the invisible speaker, that I had forgotten a curtain, and went down town to where they kept the seductive allurements in whose sparkling bubbles lurk more Satanic destruction than ever entered the herd of

swine that slid down the hill into the sea. I called for two horns, quaffed the brandy down and went back. I had two boys prepared for the act of cutting their heads off. Had the Marshal's boy's head through the hole in the platter, and commenced. Ladies and Gentlemen: If you have the blood hound hearts to stand and gaze on a human being thus murderously presented before you, and not be moved with horror—if you can look upon the scene of an innocent child, the son of your Marshal, without your hearts melting with emotional feelings, then I inquire, to what race do you belong? I could not play it so fine on these sharpshins as I did out in the brakes—they saw it was a salted case being put oil on them for fresh trout, and began: "Hiss, hiss, murder! assassin! put him out, Zim, Zim, arrest him, he's killed your little boy! *down in front.*" And in my excitement, I reeled back, for the narcotical substance just began to simmer. I staggered against the stand and down I come, on the boy that was under it, and here we was, all in a pile, making more noise than hogs in a slaughter pen. Hoss nides and snake skins, what a splurge I'm in agin! The boys clapping their hands like ten thousands clap-boards; stamping their feet like pounding beef for a boarding house; cheering as if Mark Twain was lecturing; screaming *down in front*, come to therear, pick up yourself, don't kill Cal; put his head on again, and kill Pat—luno what else. Yet I was not to be whipped. So I under took the ring trick. I got my cane, strung the ring over the cane after having first given it for scrutinization to Benjamine Casebolt, a blacksmith, then I got the "lap ring" as they called it, placed it in in my mouth and sprinkled it with a crimson looking fluid, and remarked: Ladies and Gentlemen: You see before you one that has a cheek hard enough to admit of a ring passing through it, of course I must have an extra hard cheek to undergo all this: And whack I took the stick that Ben. and another fellow was holding. I struck such a blow that it knocked the stick out of their hands, and staggered back, and forgetting what I had in my hand, dropped the ring on the floor. Moll Keller and Sally Horner! what a cry was set up then. They slapped their hands and stamped their feet, and yelled out, "there's your lap ring, pick it up.—where did you steal Jake Page's clover ring for hog's snouts?" The gals were all grinin' and their teeth looked white, because they was seeing so much fun out of Shacklefoote. I made an effort to pick up the ring, and down I went like a stick-and-clay chimney falling in a mud hole. Then the applause came in agin. Still I would not give in. I told them I was given to such tricks when I thought of something nice. They wanted to know what it was, and I told them it was a gal, but the nice part was the trick she learned me to do. It was the wizard's supper. I got the paper and commenced chewing and craming it apparently down me like putting hay in a barn loft, and I soon got hold of the barber's pole, and drew it out like drawing a rabbit out'en its burrow. It broke in the middle and then another wild cry was set up. "Harry there's your barber's pole, run tell Zeke to come and get his pole, Shacklefoote's going to swallow it again! He's swallowed a telegraph pole and tore his throat out. Where did you get that mule's tail *down in front.*" I was sick of "down in front," but I was in it too deep to jump out until I gave it another trial. I mixed the paper around, and got hold of the Atlantic cable—this was a long strip of fine paper, in a roll so as to resemble a long rope. I commenced drawing it out until I had about twenty feet, then they "set'er up agin." What a noise they made about a little piece of paper; they yelled out "look out Shack, what you have got there, when did you swallow that bed cord? look, he's pulling his wind pipe out, cut it off—Zim, arrest him, he's trying to pull his insides out—you've stole that rope off Edisons well—*down in front.*" I was getting tired of it, but thought I would try one more and see if I could get some trick on them. I took some needles and strung them on a thread and showed them some not strung, and told them I was going to thread them with my tongue. I had them in my mouth and put in the others, rolled them around with my tongue and drew them out in a string—they was a little misled about it, till I turned to take the loose ones out of my mouth, and in tumbling them around, got three or four run half way through my tongue. I began to hawk and claw with both hands, the tears run out of my eyes, but succeeded in

getting them out and flung them all over the floor. They went to squalling and shouting, "what are you doing with your mama's needles in you mouth, t'ying to make some one think you're sharp as they are. Go home and let'er patch your breeches with them, run for the doctor, he's got a fit on, hlep,—*down in front.*" I wanted to get out of it, some way, but didn't know how. I thought I would try one more. I had an old pigeon, and told them if the, would behave I would show them a trick worth double the price of admission. It was funny to see the tricks I had been at, and they wanted to see another. I called for a hat, and a young druggist passed his over. I took it and got the stand out that my fall had fractured, placed the hat over it and poked the old pigeon through the hole in the stand. I might have passed this trick on them, if I had not forgot where my hand was, and in taking the hat up, they discovered my hand holding the pigeon. What another halleluliah! it seemed as if every throat and set of lungs was employed in one soul harrowing scream—fiercer than fifty panthers; yelled louder than a whole tribe of Indians, shouted like multitude of the groes at camp-meeting in a Southern clime or a street full of police men; "shoo pigeon, fly pigeon, get loose, Shacklefoote will swallow you Bid get your hat. Take your hand out of there." The old pigeon flopped out. Soared upon its pinions so fairy-like, and seated himself upon a beam in the garret, and looked down upon us as if to say "depart from here ye workers of such iniquity." I would have went long before, but could think of no way to free myself from such a punishment. The crowd began to look for something else, and I seen it had to come to a bluff or something worse. We had promised them a dance after the performance and some of the gals got anxious to see it out, and made some remark about the dance, and said that if they kept up such a fuss as that, they would have to do their dancing to-morrow, I began to realize what was the matter. They was getting out of humor, and I thought my best plan would be to do something that would make them more out of humor, and began to look up some other trick. I called for some young lady's handkerchief. I didn't intend to do much, only start them, for they were staying too long. I liked female society, but I did not like so much in pile. So I thought I would politely dismiss them, and invite them to come and see me again. I took the handkerchief, admired it very much, wondered if I would ever have a wife to do up handkerchiefs so well as that. Started back, dropped the "kerchief," and some one kicked it back to the gal, and I made a stagger, kicked over the "pigeon stand," tore the curtain down, and by this time, the additional "swigs" I had taken, set me in a fair way to make a good blunder. I run backward, snorted, kicked and stamped, till every one thought I was going mad, and fled. When the house was cleared, I sacked my traps and toddled out no better pleased than any of them.

Haul to~there—dash my head into a soap gourd—skin my nose mit a nutmeg grater—take my tongue for tad-pole killer—comb my head with a two horse harrow—chuckle me under the chin with a churn dasher—I had done it then—Flint-lock Robins!

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CHAPTER VI.

The Artopticon or Sermon in the Valley.

AIR:—*The Gray Goose March.*

The foolish Virgins never trims
The lamp, that lighteth her on;
So then, a warning take of them,
When you have an Artopticon.
And when you go to have a show,
Be careful with the sheet;
And then your minister wout know
When with him you must meet.

BROTHER BRITCHESLEG

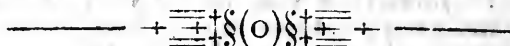
NOW reader, I've come to see you again; and how do you all feel after our rumpus in the plow-house? I feel like an old pair of linsey wolsey breeches; like worsted, though I hope that you feel better than I do. Perhaps you think that I am done showing, but not so, 'tis true I have not tried any more for a while, but remember that I have taken this for my mission, my way of bread getting, and my field of harvest, the watch word "shove ahead" and falt'r not, lest I perish by the fall. I was desirous to get something more, and some new place to go to show at, and thought I would strike out and see if I could find out some new trick, I knew a place away down the river, I imagined that it would be a good place to try some more of my tricks, if I could get nothing better. So I packed up every thing I could toat easy, and climbed on the train; the conductor come round and asked me where I was moving to, I told him I was going down the country aways to get up a snow; well says he why didn't you take a freight with your plunder, we don't haul such loads on here; you'll have to change on to a flat next station, now thought I, here is going to come something else; but I told him I wanted to go to the third station, and I was going to stay on there, or I and him would have an Irish wedding or an Irish wake, whichever he wished to call it, but he didn't seem to want any fun, so I past to the third station; then I had to shoulder my luggage and mosey out, I made it to a friends, about a mile away from the station, I had a big valise full of tricks, bundle of curtains-sheets, in one huge roll, and 2 long pawpaw poles. I arrived at my old friends, and had a long talk with him and his old lady; then I told them, I had thought of having a show some where in the neighborhood, if I could get a house or a room to show in, they were all anxious to see it go off, and my friend "Em" told me she knew where I could get a room; she said I could get a room over in the warehouse at the station where I had come past. Next morning I set out to see about it, I found the agent a gentleman, and soon made arrangements for the purpose, and returned to my friends, told Em I was going up to town to put up some bills, she told me that I had better not put any bills up there, that there was a set of bad fellows there that was very apt to break up any

thing that came round, and told me that I had better put my bills up around through the bottom, and I would get a good crowd, and not have any trouble about it. I took her advice and placed them in every conspicuous place in the vicinity. But that evening I went in town to look around, and I heard them on every corner, talking about going to be a show at the Station. I had printed on the bills the trick of cutting a man's head off, and I have often regreted that I knew it. I heard them telling each other that "if Shack. didn't show that man slaughter, they would ride him on a rail to the river and baptize him for the remission of his lies." I returned to my place, and told Em. they had heard it in town, and was coming. She said it was no more use to try to please that town crowd with a show, than to make a woman like her husband. I told her that I would do something with them, as sure as 11 and 13 is 24. On the evening of the show, me and Em. went over, and thought if anything unusual had happened I would not undertake the operation. Em. went to a friend's house, while I and her brother got things in shape. Em. came down to see how I was getting along, and I told her she must keep door while I kept preparing. She was at the door when the crowd came. She stood in the door with the ticket box and said:

"Now, Ladies and Gentlemen: I am here to dispose of tickets for the Hon. Allehue Shacklefoote's Comical and Magical Entertainment. If any one wishes to enjoy the pleasure of a spleen shocking laugh, come and purchase your tickets." They all purchased a ticket, like they were going to see Barnum. They thought I had some one there that needed killing, and would allow them to share in the sport. But the preparation for this feat is too unhandy to be carried around, as I was traveling. They were all in fine spirits, or else fine *spirits* was in them. I commenced with the barber's pole; but that was only a vexation:—they yelled out "throw that bloody paper out of doors, and let us see the man killed—we want to see how bold a murderer you are—we want to see who you are going to assassinate." I told them I did not have the required articles to perform that trick, but would show some that was as good, and would come back some time and perform the trick for them. That made them worse, "liar, thief, traitor, villian' scoundrel, burgler, treason! treason!! treason!!!—put him out, he's stole our money—what'll we do with him." By this time I put in a word a little louder than I was in the habit of exerting my lungs, and told them I had the trick with me, and would show it in perfection; but I always made it a point to tell my audiences that I did not have it, so as to see how much I could surprise them, and how much they wanted to see it; but I was the surprised party this time; for they said I might as well say grace, if I didn't show that trick. Em. had already warned me. No box to cut on, no way to get out but to lie out. I knew the train would soon be there, but I knew no way to get on. No use to try to plead out; and began to think I was doomed to take a bath in the river before breakfast. Em. was getting pretty well scared as well as myself, and she would do anything to get me out; but poor little creature how could she

do anything. I told them I would do some other trick before I commenced the man carving. They were getting worried and threatening to lay me in the fountain for my misconduct. I heard the train roaring, had little time to think, and if I did not escape, I was gone. Em. was trembling like a leaf. I told Em. that I had to get out the best way I could, and for her to go out and not let them that she was out. I began to pack up behind the curtain, and all was looking for me to begin my carnage. They called for Shack. to come out and do something. The locomotive squealed, and—murder! help! oh!—came the cries of a female in agony. No time to inquire what was the matter, for all thought they knew, and rushed out expecting to find a female form crushed beneath the engine; but none was found. I landed safely on the train, and when Em. saw I was safe, she darted behind the crowd, and no one knew what caused the racket. Now, you think I've lied, but it's as true as Ingersoll's sermons, or a tale told by a politician or a description of an article by an auctioneer, and I have the best of proof in California to substantiate it. I didn't stay to help hunt the woman, but Em. told me they didn't find her abut. Thus ended the performance and I was driving towards home, and left Em. to dismiss the company. I don't know whether she did or not, but I'll bet the best dog I've got in my drove, they missed me! I found nothing new this time, and had almost given up all hope of finding anything new, and had about half way concluded to throw up on the trick show, when an old gentleman told me he had an instrument that was entirely new; that no one had ever seen anything like it, and I could do good business with it, and he would let me have it on good terms, and his son could help me until I got familiar with its management, and so on. I went one evening to "zamine" the institution. It was a great concern, it looked like the engine and boiler of a mill, or the machinery of a Still. The old gentlemen got'er in fix and began to operate it. It showed the Yose-mite Valley; the creation of the world the Foolish Virgins, and where Samson ran his head in the lion's mouth, and turned him wrong side out. It struck my fancy. He said he was going away for a while, and if I wanted to use it in my show, I could have it till he got back, I wanted it because I needed it. I thanked him for his kind offer, and promised to pay him for the use of it besides. We fit'er up, and took a valise, and a pair of saddle bags as big as two calf skins sewed together, to put it and the fixtures belonging to it in. I wanted some place to show, for I had something new to show. I soon found a place, and we got our old Artopticon in shape, and set out for the log school hut, to give our first big display with the "out-on-topt-of-the-com-pin," as it was called. It was nothing more than a Magic Lantern, but it had to be called something frightful, to attract notice. We arrived about dark and stretched the curtain on which to show Adam's creation etc. The crowd began to gather and wanted to see the out-on-topt-of-the-com-pin. We had the views in the proper place, and announced her ready. We lighted it, and I commenced, Ladies and Gentlemen: Here we are going to show you the creation of the world, as it was, when Adam was created in the begining—an' out went our light. They told us it was like the Davenport spiritualist performances. They done everything they could to tease us. I told them we had forgotten to bring any oil with us. They said were like the foolish Virgins,—we never trimmed our lamps. Billy, the old gentlemen's boy, who gave me the loan of his lamp, said he'd go and borrow some oil,—he poted out and was gone about as long as a lazy boy after a bucket of water, and returned without any oil. We had to adjourn *sine die*. In our hurry to leave we forgot our sheet, and to our sad misfortune, the next day was Sunday. When Monday came and invited me out to make inquiry about the mysterious disappearance of the lost, hidden or stolen sheet. I had not proceeded far, when I met a Hard-Shell Baptist preacher. I asked him if he had heard o' any one in his neighborhood or elsewhere who had found a sheet that had been used some. "Whar did ye lose it at," says he. I told him that I lost it Saturday evening at the school house. "Now, that's a party piece o' bisness you're into. I seed ye're sheet hangin' in the school house yesterday when I war holden meeten thar; thar's whar you're sheet is an' let me tell ye hein, if that's the kind o' bisness you're follerin', whar to Goodness,

do ye reckon you'll come to, yes, whar'll ye be, when the old ring tailed Satan comes like a roarin' line seekin' whom he kin devour; you'll be weepin' an' nashin' you're teeth, that's whar you'll be. What do ye think tha Lord'll say to ye? He'll say 'depart ye cussed into everlastin' punishment, prepared for the devil an' his angels, for I don't know ye!' and ye'll be cast into outer darkness, whar thars weepin' and wailin' and nashen o' teeth, so ye will. You're travelin' the broad road now aint you? They's nothin' in the way, now, but it'll not be that way alars, and"— I expect the old skunk would been at it yet, if I hadn't stop-ped him. I told him that I was no stoical being that had no heart, and that I had never heard the right kind of a preacher, and if he would go and baptize me I would give up my wicked and worldly ways, and try to walk with the children of the righteous. "Lord bless yer soul, if you have faith as tha grain of mustard you kin be baptized in yondro brook, and you're sins'll float down the stream, untell your soul's washed clean!" I told him I had faith in his word, and wanted him to embalm me in the pool of Siloam, and wash my sins away. I looked as innocent as a sheep with its nose bloody. We went down to the branch of Jardon, and prepared for the immersion. I thought I was a little rude, but the old fellow ought to have a little pay for his sermon in the valley, and I had no way of paying him, except to learn him a lesson, and I think he learned one too. We walked into the water, which was getting pretty cool. He commenced "Now, my Almighty Saviour, hair's a showman, repented of his sin, oh, pardon him," and a few more remarks, and down he took me. I seized him by the collar and brought him down after me. If you ever seen whales flounce or sharks flutter, he done it. He roared like a calf dying with frozen tater in its throat. He kicked and made more of a splunge than a catfish with its eyes punched out. Hurrah! let's go to supper, John Ash Hopper.



CHAPTER, VII.

The Later Scrapes with the Artopticon.

AIR:—*De ole Gray Mar come tarin' outen de Wilderness.*

Now holy Christians one and all,
Come look on the scenes of ye olden time;
The magic lamp, though very small,
Will show them to you very fine.
That light! that light! do shut it off.
Or it will destroy us all;
Lookout! that mar will throw you off,
And that will be as bad.—OLD FLAG TAIL.

NO doubt but you have accused me already of using too much hyperbole, and would like to hear something of more interest. And now I am going to run at you again, we found our sheet; right where we had left it and now we had everything to gether again, but I had not got to see how the new spanish fan dangled back-acting, steam heating fire resisting, nonexplosive aparatus which was warranted never to rip ravel, nor run down at the toe, get hot in the guzzle, nor wear out at the wide end to which the tickets is 3 hugs 2 kisses 1 smack, and a squeeze I was getting anxious to see how the tarnel critter was going to act, and so finally I made up my mind to make anothe trial I

recollected how my trick show had took with the people where I had made my first trip, so I put out to make arrangements for another conglomeration. I had my bills struck for the Artopticon describing many old scenes and biblical events and the like, thinking that I had got something wonderful nice, I started went over to an old gentlemans house that had the managing of the school house, and he managed something else too, for he had a great big dog; and that wasn't all either, he had several fine girls; and he had one of the crossest old beasts that ever was in a pasture; I wasn't thinking of the old brute bothering me at all, I went to the gate took hold of the latch, I noticed the old brindle fellow lying near the walk that led to house I saw him roll his great huge blood shotten eyes, as much as to tell me that I had no business inside but I would go in *noleus voleus*, I opened the gate and started to go through; the old son of satan raised and made for me, I turned, but before I could get the gate open agin he nailed me right by the gable end of my trousers and held on like a vice, I screamed for him to let go but, he held tighter, I managed to get the gate open and hauling him after me, I got his neck between the gate and post and if ever I pulled at a gate I did then, I had the old dogs head through the gate and had him as fast as if he had been in a bears hug, every girl, woman, and child on the place, come runing and screaming and scolding old touse, with clubs broom churn-dasher, ax-handle, cradle-rockers pot-hooks, and every article of battle that could be got. They all feathered in on him and if ever you seen a dog get a frailing he gct one, I had already cut his wind off I thought enough to satisfy him, but soon as I let go a little he jirked his head out, and then my escape had to be by flight, I crossed the lane, jumped the fence, and an old gander that was minding the nest seized me right by the calf of the leg, Moll-row! how it hurt, he biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder. I turned on the old gander for fight I kicked and cuffed and tried every way to whip him off, but he held on with iron jaws, and battled me with the elbows of his wing till he raised big blue spots as big as horse shoes all over my legs arms and every place that he could get a lick in on me, while I was right in the busiest part of the battle, I seen old

hornet coming bawling, bellowing, pawing twisting his tail, rolling his eyes, and throwing the dirt worse than a dozen Irishmen working on Era Canal, I knew very well that retreat was necessary, for I had as much as I wanted to do with the old fowl that had showed foul play already, I started to run across the lot or pasture with the old gander hanging on to my leg and squalling every breath he drew; old hornet was right on to me but I tore lose from the old gander and cleared my self in to a thorn patch, tore off half of my clothes and a big patch or two of skin as big as pancakes, tore my flesh in a dozen places and went home whiped out completely. Then I had to wait until I could get a chance to catch him away from home, and it was not long till I saw him on the road to mill and obtained permission to perform my new aparatus in the school house, but the old mans son that had helped me with it before had went away, and I was left alone with the monster show, and I had it all to carry myself, the time was here for me to fix for it, I had no vehicle and had to ride an old mare of my friends, I had much to pile on the critter, I took care to fill the lamps before starting I had a valise full before, a pair of saddlebags behind, and several other things around me, I was off for my show, pretty soon I met old friend Math Nueder, he wanted to know where 'as I going, I told him, I was going to Virginy, he seemed to be surprised, and gave good advice, bidding adieu we shook hands and parted; and to this day he thinks I am in Virginia. I went on until I reached the spot, tied up old flagtail, and went into the house, a friend helped me get things set up, it was not long till the crowd come pouring in and gathering around the door they had seen the bills, and seen that it was a scriptral thing as they called it, they didn't see how any body could show David Daniel and Sampson when they had been dead 50 years, one old fellow said that he had no idea that we had any of 'em, he said that "Abraham had been dead to his knowin' over 40 year' yes says one of them "they say they 're goin to show old sampson a killin the lion, don't we know that Delily courted it outen sampson whar his great strength war, an then the filicitians killed him an thats been a 100 years ago, yes mor'n that I rec-ken" we told them that it was just the pictures of them paint-

ed on glass, and we was going to make them look big, on a sheet stretched against the wall, one old fellow said that "if its goin to be a pictur' show he'd go home, he had the pictur' of George Washin'ton, Henry Clay, and Gen'rl Jackson, an they 're as good picturs as he wanted to see" we told them we had an instrument that would show its pictures in the most magnificent manner and if they wanted to see all the wonderfull scenes of the scriptures that we were going to have them to be seen. We coaxed them into the house and got their quarters and then we commenced displaying the scenes of painted glass and coal oil, we had showed the great creation of the world and Adam in the garden where Eve begiled him, and he turned states evidence on the poor gal; some would say that they had never heard tell o' the like. Some wanted to know if we did n't have ole Satan in their a shinin out sich light as that was, through his eyes, they were all enjoying it to their hearts content when I thought I would make it do its best licks, to see how well I could please them, I turned her up a few pegs and there we had it. The oil had got in good fix and when I turned it up, it shot a flame higher than a man with a plug hat on, standing in a grog shop. Such an other light never was seen since Nero had his banquet on the lake; and another such knocking over benches, rolling tumbling, crying cursing knocking out window lights, and crowding out of the house, never was seen or heard of before. One got his ear cut a little, and maybe you think he didn't make more ado over that one ear, than ninety and nine that got no scar. He said he had paid enough money to buy three ducks, and he had saved on purpose to go into the show, and now he would have to work half a day digging tater for Hiram to cotch up. During the time I got the old rattle trap to the door and kicked it as far as I could. It went whiling through the air with such force that it was extinguished. I went to sacking up again. Everything ready I led old flag tail to the fence and got on. I told her to start, but she stood still as an Egyptian mummy. I knew she was a good balker to a wagon, but never thought of her attempting to balk while riding. I tried persuading her with a club, when all at once she went plunging and rearing, the Artopticon making

more fuss than six spinning wheels, three looms weaving, two cotton gins, and fifty log chains, all going at once! She stopped as suddenly as she started and wouldn't go till I gave her a good mauling. Oh Moll! quit stamping my toes, if I wasn't mad. Had tore my new show all to peices, and couldn't get home without walking and leading old flag tail. I tried moral suasion, but found no pay in it. I tried corporal punishment, and this time she reared higher than a dog trying to reach a side of meat; and kicked worse than dad's brindle cow when you go to milk her, and shook her head like a woman shakes her fist at her husband when she has the breeches on, and switched her tail like a pole cat in a fight, and plunged head-long into the bushes, where they were thicker than bugs in boarding house—into a patch of rose briars, thorns bushes, green briars, honey locust, and everything that bears stickers, was onto me, under me, around me, and sticking into me—wild cats, tom cats, nor mad cats could be a "patchen" to it! I rolled, kicked, tumbled, swore, and worked like a set of men trying to put out fire in a dry rail fence in August. My neck, legs, arms was wrapped, tangled and bound with briars, oak limbs, grape vines and everything that could get hold of me. They gathered round me, and it was darker than a man's face when you axe him to borrow a quarter. They asked if I was killed, and I told them to listen at me kicking that darned magical candle stick, if they thought I was dead. Now what scrapes I'm in—scraped all over with thorns, and Jack Cooper couldn't tell what else. The old brute got the bridle fast in some brush and held her fast as a coon in a pole trap. I worked my way out, got my magic machinery packed up, and laid across the saddle, and racked out leading old flag tail like a gentle dog, until I got to an open place, and then led her to a stump, and mounted into the saddle. I expected she would dart off like a thief in a cornfield, but she stood as firm as a sturdy oak! I commenced using a board that I had picked up. She stood it as long as she thought an animal ought to take such treatment, and raised her back in the middle and stretched out her neck, and I began to understand that some one had to either come off, or stay on. I made it up to stay on till I was put off. She

kicked up behind and before at the same time,—at least I failed to notice any difference, but I held on like a sailor riding the waves. Finding that I was going to stick to her like a grease spot on a carpet, she light down the road. It wasn't far to a house, and if you ever heard rattling and banging it was then. I had to let her go at full speed or not all. Here we went, and out came three curs, four hounds, six or seven fisties, yaw-yaw, yelp-yelp; every one in the house ran out "what's the matter?" I yelled at the top of my voice, that old touse was dying and went on. Here—there—saw my leg off above my elbow, and arm below my knee, ruffle my temper with a fluting iron, and poke me in a pond to heal my wounds.

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CHAPTER, VIII.

Offers description of the Show on the Big Muddy

AKERS—*The o d mad wench.*

The great comic theater, has now begun,
Come buy you a ticket, prepare to see fun;
Here now is the place to buy you some fun,
Come buy you a ticket before it's all done.
"We've got bars and wolves and all such things you know;
You'll never regret that you took it in so,"
And there are two Akers with their fence posts,
But I have an idea they paid for the roast.—**HE SAW.**

WHEN I reached home that night, after the "fast ride," I found my brother and two of my sisters had returned from a trip in Arkansas. They told me they had perused the State and father had settled for a while on the Big Muddy, some 80 miles South from where I was then staying, with a sister in the village of Old-Town, whom they had come to visit, and soon as they visited around a while, were going back to spend the winter on the Big Muddy, and wanted me to go with them. I had not seen my parents since they drew their sheets over the wagon several months before, to pull for Arkansas. I had done about as many tricks as I cared to do there, hence, was easy to persuade. When they got ready we started on our tour, on the banks of the Big Muddy. You see I had already laid waste with the Artopticon, and trick show, and of course must try to get up something different or quit. I concluded to quit and try to be somebody. This way of running around; getting in

scrapes and getting scraped myself, and having ganders flopping me; dogs running after me; kings of cattle running after me; old mares tumbling me into beds of briers, curs, fistes, hounds and "wimmin" running after me, was not pleasing to me, and I wasn't going to put up with such business. I knew I was marked off for some great man or high calling, and if no disfiguration interfered, I was the kind of a man to surmount any common difficulty. I went to reading the Bible, and told every body that I was going to preaching; that I had been baptized, and was going to preaching at once. I knew a splendid place to commence, called "Posum Bend School house." I would read a while, then go in the orchard and practice preaching a while; and during this time I could scarcely tell what ailed me, for I could hear music; my ears would stop up and I'd want to dance, and play on my fiddle, and to play some kind of a trick on some one, and every time I would go to read, the Bible would open where Samson had the lion down, or where Adam was being created, and the creation of the world, or where I had had such gay old times with the old magical piece. Time marched round, for me to be off to "Possum Bend" church. I found a good houseful and made preperation to begin. I walked in with my saddle bags on my arm, looked around and drew out my Bible and commenced:

LADIES AND GENTLEMAN:—The whole congregation began to stare at me, as if I was blaspheming. I noticed the disturbance, and said, Brethren and Sisters, please grant me an excuse for such rude mistakes; sometimes instead of preaching I deliver a lecture on religion, and it becomes necessary to address the people as all the commonwealth. I had been to a dance, party or hoedown, the night before, and the music was ringing through my head. I was not there to defile myself, but because I loved the music, and to see them dance.

Brethren and Sisters: The subject matter of this evening's devotion, you will find in the book of Job, xxxix:5-8. "Who hath sent out the wild ass free? Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren place his dwelling. He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing." Bill, Van, Dick, and all my old show associates were there, expecting me to bleat out like the lost sheep of Isreal; the thoughts of the night previous were fresh in my memory—I wanted to cut up.—I thought how lively they all were in my previous undertakings, and how stupid they were there. "My sin stricken Brethren and more especially the sistern, and why, perhaps you will ask, do I lay such stress on the sisterns. I was beginning to think about the gay time we had the night before, and said, because I would not have them look so distressing as they are looking now—"all promenade," I yelled, which set them all in wonder, at their new preacher; but before any one rebuked me for my defect, I said, all prominent made people resume a pleasing look and never appear so disconsolate for our text shows us that we should be more

free and independent, for don't it say, "He regardeth not the crying of the driver," so, let us not be driven to such grave appearance. As I was begining to lay it off with both hands, I raised my voice to a higher key and said, "Adam am left" —there was another interuption. The class leader looked as light as a woman when she finds her setting goose broken up; but I made another retraction, and said, "yes, my brethren, Adam am left sure, if he did not make repentence, for does our text not teach us, that all are given the boundless wilderness for our habitation, and all green things are at our command; why then should Adam just for curiosity, trespass thus, by eating one kind of fruit." And while I was expaciating on "Adam's transgression," I lost myself again, and "balance all" went loud enough to be heard across the river. Some began to mutter; some were expanding their sides with laughter, and some were looking at me as if they thought me a runatic; but I said, "yes, the balance of all mankind have trespassed thus wickedly upon the same holy law!" I was going in on it, and 'cesha eight?' I bawled, but before they got far in their surprise, I said: Such should be made eat sour green apples all the days of their life. I was then getting leveled down to it in good earnest, and began to think of some old comic songs that I used to sing in my exhibitions, and started off, "The bullfrog jumped into the spring, sing song, Kitty can't kimaoh." This time they gathered their hats and bonnets, and said they didn't come to be ridiculed in no such manner. I told them they were all mistaken, that I had been taking quinine and it had made me very delirious, and besides, I always lisped, and they had not understood me. I told them I had said, the bullfrog jumpeth when he maketh a spring, and was going to say, if they would be like him, they could be more like the righteous, and for them to make a trial as accurate as the frog maketh his spring." I told them the other part of my mistake was, that I was thinking I would call on Miss Kitty Carpenter to sing a hymn, but then thought it was not time, and had said the bullfrog jumpeth when he maketh a srping, sing a song Kitty, but it isn't time yet. I got straightened out again and was rolling it off like Anna Dickinson lecturing. It was getting pretty late, and I began to think of a certain step I used to dance in my performances, and I had seen a fellow the night before 'clip' the "toe nail touch," and letting myself run away, commenced, "that's the touch" and up I hopped—such a clatter you never heard before, nor I either. I kicked er off lively, singing as I stepped, "cuss a nigger, cuss him dead, cuss his ugly wooly head." This was a final settlement; they gathered their slouch-caps and out they went, worse beat than people at a barbacue, when the roast don't come off.

I seen that it was no use for me to try to make a preacher. I was too full of comic feelings, to try such work, and saw that I was evidently laid out for a showman, and concluded to get up another show. I had always been successful enough, except where such mishaps as I had been into were impossible, and thought I would try to get up some kind of a rig that would not be so apt to fail, and one that would bear detection. My sister had been staying in a village on the Big Muddy, where the young folks had a very fine concert, and she being a member of their comedy company, I knew we could give a good concert. Consequently I went to fixing for a Thearetical Concert. Had some new bills printed, and was going make the spoon this time, sure as nine and seven makes a spittoon. I rented a room in the third story of a big hotel, got everything

in booming style. I had to undertake something new again. I had never acted like a negro, for I didn't like their way of doing business, and therefore had never practiced after them; but thought I could try at any rate. We loaded up, got our tricks ready and again set out to make another attempt. You know about as much of a showman's life as I can tell, but I will remind you of a few such remarks and inquiries as they have to hear. We had our things in the house, when big boys, negro boys, men, women, and everything that could ask a question, gathered round and asked such questions as—

What kind of a show have you got; what are you going to show; whose the one 'ats goin' to do the showin'; have you got any bars, an' wolv's an' badgers, an' sich like; what do you charge to go into the show; how much'll it take to take me in; when are you goin' to commence; what's that woman's name; what's she goin' to do; who's goin' to play the tricks; won't you give me a free ticket, I used to belong to a show; hellow Shack, that's you, reckon you'll pass me in free; I'll help you fix up your tricks if you'll pass me in; how many is thev of youall; youall belong to one family; what's that one's name? and dozens of questions that would fill a volume.

Jim Offord come up, a great big robust, big enough to swallow three such shows. "Hellow boys, what have you got here" we told him we was going to have a show, and wanted him to take'er in. "Certainly we'll take'er in, get your tickets, and we go." We opened the ticket office, and they all stood like a bashful gal when her beau is about. We told them we were ready to receive the crowd, and was going to have a real good time—a grand theater, comedy, nigger show, and everything there was fun in. I golly, said a round headed little nig, if u's gwin to give us something right funny, jist git two ole coons an' git 'em a fightin' that'll be mo' fun as you kin show. Offord came in front, and commenced his description of what few animals he said we had with us, and this is part of his oration:

Now boys, walk right up, buy your tickets; here is the place to buy yourself more fun for less money than you will ever have again, this company has got to have money to travel with, and we must all pay our share, so come along, see the monkey, see the bear, they've got them here; so never fear, to see your share, you must prepare, and go in there, come now, boys, men and everybody, buy your tickets and walk in and see the savage lions, tigers, elephants, rhinoceros kangeroos, hyppopotamms, bears, apes, badgers and several others of the brute and monster creation; buy your tickets for Shacklefoote's comedy company, ice cream, lemonade, and cigars, come here every one, go into this show, you never will regret it, so come along, let's take'er in, and see how much fun we can get out of it.

They flogged around him like he was some super natural being, speaking in an unknown tongue. Each one bought a

ticket, and went clammering up stairs. Wil-o-the-wisp, what another mess them lads were. We tried to get them quiet; but it would have been about as much use to try to quiet a herd of Texas cattle. They wanted to know whar them huge monsters of bars an' wolves, and all sich war as Jim said you were goin' to show. I told them we did not promise to show any such. Was going to have a comedy selection or comical interlude. They said they wanted no comucle interluges, they wanted to see them'er bars an' wolves they had paid to see, I told them I would show them some tricks if they didn't like the deluge show; but still they wanted to see the "bars an' wolves." But I endeavored to try some trick, and begun with the magic egg bag. I got my poke, and went to try it on 'em. The poke had a secret pocket in it, and I placed the eggs in their respective places, and said, now here is the wizard's egg bag trick, and slashed it about on the floor, and then began to draw out the eggs.

There now, look thar, he's stole the ole settin' hen's eggs all outen her nest, whar she's been sittin' for four weeks or more; hi thar, your mammy, I'll give it to you when she misses her ole hen's eggs. He's a robber, guilty o' robbin' a hens nest; sneak off an' die, shame on you; fie to you; he's a sheep, no he aint, hes a skunk, 'cause skunks robs hens nests; he's wus'ern a pole cat; a 'possum wouldn't do so mean; no, a sucker aig dog'd be ashamed to do the like. I rubbed burnt cork over my face and fixed up in Southern costume, and came out and they began to whoopee, thars Scott. Howdy Scott, what in thunder you doin'. I got my old fiddle and began to sing, and every voice in the house joined in and began mocking me sing. Some would go like goats bleating, others like cattle lowing, dogs howling, roosters crowing, hogs squealing or mules braying. I was trying to sing the song about the little nigger seeing an elephant eating with his tail. They went at it again:

Just listen to that song! hi thar, if that the kind of a elefant you've got, we don't want to see him. If he kin eat with his tail and mouth too, you must have a hard time feedin' 'em. Whar did you git sich a elefant, we don't want to see sich elefants as 'em.

Then I told them I would play the comedy of Brown's horse. Now for some fun for them, They began to call for Al. Brown to come and tend to his hoss, that Shacklefoote was going to play some kind of a trick with him.

Maybe ride him off to Lexington, and furgit to fetch him back. Who knows as that's his business stolen hosses anyhow? Seems as if he knows a 'tarnal sight of stuff anyhow.

Then I said something about an old wench. Moll Keller and Sall Smith! how I caught it then. There were six or

eight of the biggest wenches there that ever stood over a tub and they all commenced on 'me at once.

Yeh, you ole good fo' nothin' lian thief, comin' roun' here wid vo' lies, gettin' Jim Offord to lie fo' you, so you can cheat us out ob our little chink, an' den makin' fun ob us wimmin; fo' one cent, I'd maul you good, you good-fo'-nothin' onay scamp. Go in on 'em Hannah, I'll see you far play outen it.

The savage old African was raving, and swearing she would whip the dirt out of Shacklefoote, they were all in a mixed mess, foaming and charging, because we hadn't showed them, bars and wolves. I was wanting to get shut of them as bad as I did in the plow house. A big smart lad run against the curtains and begin, "Brown had a hoss." I was inside the curtain, and took him a lift with my elbow, which limbered him. Death and destruction! what another noise he made. I looked for the whole crowd to pile on to me, but fortunately enough, I had darted outside the curtain, and no one knew who was perpetrator. The boy was rolling and tumbling over planks and every thing in his reach, making more of a noise than any of them cared about hearing; and some concluded to see how bad he was hurt, and began proding him with pins and needles to try his feelings. In an instant he raised up, kicked over benches, chairs and put out the lights close to him. I had put out the lights behind the curtains, and we were then in a mixed up muss; the boy went rolling down stairs, crying murder, death! I'm cut all to pieces. The crowd went tumbling down stairs to see what was the matter, and as soon as the last one was out I locked the door until I got everything in shape, and then we started home. We got our wagon, and Mr. Offord helped us get our things in: We started down through the rocks, hollows, bluffs, coal pits, and everything that could be in the way. We came along opposite an old coal shaft, and found enough track iron, laid across the road to reach across the river. It was real dark, but we had to clear the track. We packed them as far as we could easily, and put them into hollows, ditches, and any convenient place we could find, to keep them from being easily found by their owners. We knew who done the work, for they were mad because they did not see the bars and wolves, as they expected. I think that Charles B., and Thomas A., thought we had the bars an' wolves with us. We traveled on

through the darkness until we came to a deep ravine, perhaps 15 feet deep, and about five feet of mud and water in the bottom. It had a bridge over it, and old Jinnie Akers had a lot of fence posts close by, and this Charles B., and Thos. A., thought they would see a little more fun, and had piled 200 posts that old Jinnie had paid \$10 per 100 for, across the bridge. They expected to see us carry them to the place where they got them but they was mistaken for once. I told the boys to do as I did and commenced to put them into the water; and the way we made ten cent posts splash in that ditch was a sin to serpents!

"Hi thar" hollowed Thos. A., "you throw them thar posters in thar I'll prosecute you, see ef I don't; them's dad's posts."

I told him to prosecute as soon as he felt like it, and I would take stock in the enterprise, and that I wanted to know who had done the work, and he hauled in his gas pod. Sail—ho—hand me a phial with a little annullifier fire in it, squeeze me in a squirl skin, hang my nose on hooked stick, take my teeth for a turning plow, three paper chisels, two glass cow bells, one bunch cat feathers and a turkey's ear—now we are ready Charles B. Corn Cracker.

CHAPTER, IX.

Negro Heel Show or Burning Out.

AIR:—*Old hog got Drunk.*

Away to Negro Heel I must go,

To get a house in which to show,

I asked the man who has it to rent,

If he would take a certain per cent;

Well, I don't do that kind of business you see,

On some other prices we must agree.—RAMROD JINKINS

THIS you see, fixed me in the way of comedy shows, on the Big Muddy, I then was outened more than ever, for I had tried almost everything that could be got into; had every way of showing, that could be found. And now must get into something else. But I was not long getting something for a change, and went to getting up a canvas. I thought that independence was all that was necessary, and if I had a tent of my own, when I got tired of a crowd, I could turn them out and go about my business, without having to get up such scares as I had been in to. I thought it would a fine thing to be so independently sit-

uated as to have a good canvas, and go when I got ready, and stop where and when I wanted to ; and not have to be running around hunting up school houses, hotel rooms, plow houses &c. After planning out my tent, I procured a lot of canvasing, poles ropes, &c., and it was no great while till I had it on foot. I set it up to see how it would ornament some nice town ; had her set up in an open place, when Laura W., came along and began asking a few civil questions concerning the affair. "How much domestic did it take to make that tent?" I told her it had taken nearly 200 yards. "Well, you had better made some sheets, bed ticks and such like, for you will never make the money back that you paid for it, now see if I am not right." "Well," says I, "Miss Laura, perhaps your advice is good, and I am sorry I canna' take it. One reason is, I have no use for bed clothes,—I have no one to share with me in them." "Yes and that is another thing you had better be doing ; get you a good woman, settle down, and quit such trifling work as running around and acting so foolish, trying to make a business of showing." But ah ! thought I, my fair good friend, when you see me settle down in that kind of a way, you can depend upon it, that I am not able to go on foot. And more, I am going to be numbered among the magicians and showmen ; and though this young Laura was as beautiful as young ladies ever can be, I could not think of trying to court her, nor any one else, for I had not, nor never expect to forget my "Tom." And now for some site to set up my mammoth pavilion. I soon found another location, near a small town, where the "corn and pumpkin raisers" were going to hold a "sell-a-bray-shun ;" some of them said it was going to be a kind of presidential 'lecshun meeting. Let it be what it might, I was after going to try my big new tent at any rate. We got everything ready and set out for the place. We got there about two o'clock. They were all in fine spirits. We seen the manager, and soon had arrangements made, and went to setting up for business. There was a company there, running a wheel of fortune, and you ought to have heard the racket they made :

Put'er down ! put'er down ! the circus'll soon be ready, and you'll want money to go into the show, and right here is the place to make it ! Come right along and put'er down, put'er down ! and make yourselves money enough to go.

We had to work like beavers, to get ready before the crowd all left ; for it was getting late and beginning to look like rain, and about the time we got ready to open up, the crowd began to scatter out like negroes from a cotton field. Here we was, 15 or 20 miles from home, and a storm coming rapidly. The boys ran for their horses ; gals run here and there in earnest concern for their fine bonnets and leghorns, as well as their silken, worsted and calico frocks. Poor sweet, scared creatures, I felt more anxious about their safety, than I did for their quarters. They were all looking so pale and innocent, with fine leghorns in danger of being destroyed by the approaching storm. We had taken in a fair crowd of boys who were anxious to see the circus, as they had imagined it was going to be, and perhaps the storm was in my favor ; for they were all expecting to see a circus, and, probably they might have been as bad to deal with as the crowd Em. defeated in the warehouse ; but as the storm appeared to be very violent and close at hand, there seemed to be no contention about it, and every critter felt anxious to seek a more reliable shelter than the canvas. but the clouds diminished to some extent and passed away without much of a storm. We pulled up stakes and started for home, and traveled till camping time, and pitched our tent for the night. We hadn't been stopped long till it commenced raining, and I don't think there has ever been another such a rain since Noah landed his canoe on the mountain. It continued all night and the next day. We landed home, and I begin to think what Laura had told me was true, for that was the last time for that tent. Then I began to think I was completely out of the show business. I thought I had tried every known remedy, and O how I wished I had never been so simple as to undertake it as a business. I wished that I had never let that fairy vision of Cupidity foster upon me in such a manner as to deprive me of all that makes life enjoyable—the society of the fair sex. How happy I could have been, had I been let along and not interrupted with my Tom. Or still, how I could make myself happy, courting that pretty sweet Laura, or her little sister, or scores of others along the Big Muddy ; but alas ! 'tis done, and what's the use of whinning about it any longer. Ever and anon, I was continu-

ally on the outlook for something to do or get into. We had a good time that winter, for there were several of us living on the same farm, for it was too large for one or two men to till, and we had a lively time hunting the raccoon, opossum and other game, and early in the spring, a large circus and managerie was going to exhibit in our city of Richmond. I was delighted to see it in progress, thinking I might learn something. This circus had with it a museum, separate from the other, and in order to get a big crowd into it, they gave a free exhibition; this was a performance by the ventriloquist champion. I seen how they were constructed, and as I was always on the inside I immediately went to work to fit me up another show. I knew how to make them if I could get the material. I could not get the right kind of wax, so I got putty, linseed oil, two gourds, some small wire, some cotton batting, material to make their dresses, and about thirty other articles. I wanted some hair to trim their heads with, to make them look natural. But where was I to get it? Our girls was always using their own hair in braids etc., fast as they pulled out of their heads. They told me that Laura had lots of her hair saved up, and did not want it for anything, and I could get all I wanted of it. Well, sweet Sylvania! how was I to get it; I did not like to ask her for her hair, and knew that our girls would never think to get it for me. Laura often came to our house, and I knew she would give me her hair in a minute, but I did not want her to know what I wanted with it; but I knew it would look more simple than ever, not to tell. She soon came to our house, and I did not know whether to or not, for I would have been squelched certain, with her pretty, white, modest face, and golden hair, had it not been as before mentioned. I did not fear that Laura would say anything out of the way, for she was too good a girl. I walked in the room where she was, and said rather faintly, "Laura," she looked at me; her soft eyes resting upon me; her beautiful countenance, full of innocent womanly kindness; her sweet face would send a thrill thro' the heart of any human. Oh! I did wish I had said nothing about it, or had not been so cowardly about it. But having started it, must take what comes. "What do you want," she said. "Have you got any of your

hair?" "Any of my hair? why certainly. Whose hair did you think I had?" I told her she did not understand me, that I wanted to know if she had any of her hair that she had combed out. She said she did, and I could have it, if I would go to her house and get it. I went, and got a roll about the size of a big hornet's nest. I had everything for the champions, and fixed them up in a most natural manner; had them dressed in the style of boys and girls, and laid them away. I went making a set of Punch and Judy figures. I had something nice now—that any crowd would be amused with. I made a miniature clown, and called him Dan Rice. My father took another traveling notion, and was going back to where I had first started out. What a nice thing it would be to go back up there and show them what I had learned, and how I had improved, for I thought I had as good a show as Barnum, Dan Rice, Tony Pastor, old Faddie or any one else. Thus filled with admiration of my captivating progress, I loaded her in the wagon and took a trip up the country. We made it all right, and visited our friends, and then I went over to the Flat, where I had given the show in the plow house, and met with my old friend and violinist, ready to go with me and perform his unrivaled skill on the violin, at any time, and told me to go up the Heel and get a house, and be ready by the time he got back from across the river. I found Mr. Moling shaving shingles to cover the house I wanted to get. I asked him if he would let out for a certain part of what I took in. I had taken this precaution because I did not like the situation, and I had made so many failures, I felt a little cautious. "Well, I DON'T do that kind of business. If you want the house, we'll have to agree on a certain price, then there'll be no difficulty." I was almost at an end. I told him I would give him what was right. He said he would be fair, and I put up some bills, and left to hunt up the violinist, Schrum. I waited till late, thinking he would get back, but no Henerie Schrum; he had got belated, and I seen that I would be late if I was not off. I happened onto Willis Blankenship, and he said he would come and play for me, if my man did not come in time. I told him to come, and I would go on and be fixing things up. I rolled my boxes on a freight car, and when

I got to the station I had to leave my boxes, thinking Schrum would be there with his wagon, and bring them over. But he was not there. I had about two miles to walk, to get to my place of exhibition. I met with some gentlemen going there who invited me to put my things in their wagon, and ride over. They took my things where I wanted them, and thanked them for their kindness. Moling was gone away from town, and had left the key with an old gentleman who let me into the house; it was an upper room, and I had to go up outside. After packing up my wallets, fixing them up, and lighting some tallow candles that hung against the wall, shut the door and went to look at the factories and other important features of the place. There was two hickory pole chair factories, one third of a restaurant, part of an old store, such as an empty nail keg, old salt barrel, a few old coffee sacks, a little pile of old trace chains, and other articles of less notability. I went to the blacksmithshop, to see my old friends Joe and Jack. I had not been there long, till I was startled by a light and fearful looking smoke, up in the room where my things were. I run up quicker than you could say Sally Ann Slopbucket, and it was blazing like old rye liquor, I give the alarm of fire, and if you ever seen tin buckets, slop pails, wash tubs, and Betsy Baker couldn't tell what else. They rolled my things down in a confused pile, and after the fire was out, I sacked them and started for the station. Schrum nor Willis had not come, and I knew it would be better to be away from there anyhow. Quid Nunc—take my boots for bushel bags; my shoes for shovel plows; and my old linen coat for a ship sail. Come back here, all you that's behind and around here, all you that's in front, *enmasse*.

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CHAPTER, X.

My last Show in the Flat.

AIR:—*The Wood Cutters Sorrows.*

Come gather around me one and all

And see how little and nice a thing;

And see the champions though so small,

A beautiful song to you will sing.

You robber! you thief! you've took our cash.

For which we worked so very hard;

And showed us nothing but such trash, [head.

And you had better be on your guard.—Bill Flunk-

READER, what kind of a lunkhead do you take me to be? I promised to give you my adventures in Arkansas, and have been dallying with my experiences, before I leave the Northwest; but hope you will not think me intruding, to give you one more tale of difficulty, which this chapter concludes; then I am ready to tell you of my fearful proceedings in Arkansas, and hope they will be found more interesting and instructive. Yet those I have narrated, are, as far as scheme and theory as well as the plans and performances, as positive and potent, as any history yet written. The exaggerations of what has been said, is only little rise in describing the characters, as well as a little additional exclamatory, as in the case of the exhibition in the plow house, which nevertheless is almost as true as it could be told. Although I am not putting forth my best, and letting you hear none but those of success, I am giving you an understanding of my most difficult experiences in the beginning of my practice. After this chapter is completed, I shall give some of my interesting performances in Arkansas. I had not yet performed my new inventions, and was itching to show them. You remember the Negro Heel show did not go off. I had a friend in the Flat, who had about completed a house on front street, and was splendid place for a show. I made a dicker with him for the use of the house, and then must get ready for another round. I had not seen my champions since the Negro Heel conflagration, and so I stopped at one of my friend's house to examine them; I had made their heads white with linseed oil and zinc, and they had turned black. The boys face was twisted every way, and looked horrible. And to add to my confusion, the prettiest, nicest, goodest girl in the Flat, was there, and as soon as I commenced my examination, this pretty white faced Mary wanted to see the little ventriloquil champions. I did not know how they had been vindicated, and thought if they were anything like they were when I put them away, they would be nice enough for any one to look on, for all the girls that had seen them down on the Big Muddy, said they were real nice; but when I brought them out for Mary see—my tow breeches and Sal's tow frock! how frightful they did look—Mary was as badly ashamed of them for me, as I was myself; but did not

say anything about them, only that she thought the boy was mighty ugly. I did not allow them beautiful eyes to waste their brightness on such a sight, and soon as I could get them packed up, I took them and trudged out, and have never seen her since, nor do I want to, until that sweet Mary forgets those hideous monsters. Now my hopes became a little shaken about the evenings performance. I knew it would be useless to try to mend the tricks and champions in time for that evening. However, I posted my bills, and got things in general preperation to commence early, and had no time to be fixing up extra tricks, or fixing them over again. How do you think I come out? Why, I'll tell you. I come very near being dragged out, by the fellow who lost twenty cents. I got set up, and made a platform to show the ventriloquil figures. They seemed to be a little suspicious about going in; they had not forgot the blunders I made in the plow house. It was getting time that I was doing something or nothing, and I was doing nothing as fast as a woman's tongue can run. I got my champions ready and all the boys in town was getting pretty well filled, and feeling much more comfortable than I was, for the truth is, I felt as happy as a balky horse does in harness; for I knew if I balked they would make me go—for the fun of it. By and by, I took my scare-crows and went out to give them a free exhibition, as the museum had done. It was pretty dark, but I did not want a light, because I did not want any one to know what I had. I had them go through their dialogue of the Constantinople subject, and after that, I was going to have them sing a song, but you could no more hear what I was saying, than if you had been in a house where six or seven women were quarreling about the jealousy of their old pard; but for the benefit of their town, I will subjoin it to this chapter for a termination of the thing. Some wanted in, and others didn't want to pay so much Bill Ellis, the wood cutter, said a dime was enough. Jay Bullock, or Frank Bullock, one of them, I do not know their names, anyhow this was the one that looks like he had been hung up to make jottle out of, and dried up during the process, said it would mighty nigh strip the till of his restaurant to raise a quarter, Frank Harris said he had a quarter, but he wanted to buy some

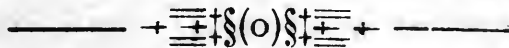
long green with it; Ben Casebolt said he would have to pound out several pieces of iron for that much, and others would make other kind of complaints. I got out and lectured to them awhile about what a fine time we was going to have in the entire procedure—about the clown, the Punch and Judy figures, and all I could get them to listen to, but they didn't seem to be taken in with such flattery—they wanted in for a dime, and after trying them sufficiently, I told Mr. Becket, who was keeping door for me, to let them in for a dime. Such a borrowing and lending of dimes was never seen since the circuit rider made his collection. Bill Ellis who lived in the river bottom, and bought a patch of land, and paid for it in work on the same land, happened to have an extraordinary friend there, and having sold a load of wood that morning, said that he would pay his friend's way in; as it took but twenty cents, he could soon cut enough wood to make it back again. They soon had the house as full as a hotel when you have nothing to pay your way with. If you ever heard six half-hounds after an old sow in a cornfield, you can form some opinion of how they had it then. All were as drunk as a schwill tub, and Willis, the fiddler, was making more fuss than all of them. I got old Punch and Judy up, and commenced trying to imitate them. O, quit gnawing my nose, if you ever heard calves bawl; mules bray, ganders fight, dogs bark, lions roar or chicken crowing under the floor when you are trying to write, you can give some idea how they went into it then. They didn't know where they were, only that Mike was not there, convinced them that it was not the saloon. I told them I had Dan Rice there, and if they would be still, I would introduce him to them; but they didn't know whether I said Dan Rice, Dick Rice or any other rice. One who pretended to hear what I said, yelled out, "hold on boys, he says he's goin' to show something darn nice, let's see what it is." They still kept up their fuss. I saw that I just as well be out of there as in and while they were making merry among themselves, I packed up, took down my curtains, and told them as they didn't want to see anything, I would give them free access to the house and go home. You had ought to been there to hear Bill Ellis and others spouted. Bill said he had worked hard for his mon-

ey and was not going to put up with it. I told him to put down into the bottoms with it then. He said he was going to have his 20 cents back, or be dying in the risk. I asked him if he would not hire me to dig a hole for him. He said it would take near half a rank of wood by the time he got it hauled and sold, and that 20 cents would have bought him tubbaker enough to last him a week,—but poor fellow, he never got his 20 cents. I took my luggage over to the depot, and come back to see how he was getting along, but he had left very much dismayed over the loss of his 20 cents. I put my things in the safest place, and pulled for home. I seen Mr. Becket and paid Mr. Gray for his broken windows, the next day, saw a few of my friends, bade them farewell, and as soon as the train moved out, I left the place and have never seen it since. Here is the song I had composed on the good people of the place for the benefit of themselves and others in general.

THE MODEL MEN OF THE FLAT.

If you will listen awhile, I'll sing you a song,
 Of the town that they call "Elm Fiat;"
 I must take the good and the bad both along,
 In order to give them a spat.
 There's old Johnny Fitz Morris, that keeps the hotel,
 He's one of them I do declare;
 You'd think that he thought there was no hell,
 To hear him to curse and to swear.
 And then there's the butcher, another shrew man,
 He slashes, he saws and he cuts;
 He sells off his beef till it spoils on his hands,
 He punches it then into guts.
 And there is Dick Best, he's a man very small,
 His debts and dues always pays;
 And though Dick is a man that is not very tall,
 He yet is a man in his ways.
 Now there is Jack Gray, 'twould be a sin to pass by,
 As Jack, he his fortune has made;
 And that he is a merchant, no one will deny,
 And commands a most heavy trade.
 And there's Elliott Christie of whom we might speak,
 Although he's an innocent man;
 Some people thinks he has a wonderful cheek,
 In the working of some cunning plan.
 And there is Zim Walker we must not leave out,
 In giving them all a round;
 For Zim is a man you remember no doubt,
 When Zim was the "hoss" of the town.
 There is Doc Ellis the druggist you know,
 Of him you can't say enough;
 For when Irish Micheal goes back on you so,
 You know that Doc keeps the same stuff.
 The next is Bill Cooper, though he should have been first

For no other man is a living
 Who has such an unequalled thirst,
 For whiskey, for money or women.
 Then there is Billy Weldon, we'll just let him rest,
 For he's the best merchant in town;
 Just always remember that he has the best
 Assortment of goods all around.
 And there is Date Powell, the post office keeps,
 He also is fond of his sports;
 And if he gets a chance, into letters he peeps,
 And then he will hint the reports.
 There is another man to whom we retort,
 His name it is nothing but Dan—
 The Elm Flat, Morguet is his favorite resort,
 And his choice there is Mary Ann.
 There's another nice man of whom we've not spoken,—
 Tom Becket, you all know the man;
 If five years of courtin' is any token,
 He'll marry a girl named Nan.
 But there is but one more of whom I will relate,
 But he's the best one of them all;
 For the big and the little, the small and the great,
 Is truly made glad by his call.
 And that is Robert Christie—some says he's a rake,
 And his tongue it runs very glib;
 And if you imagine he won't tell you a fib.
 Why that's where you make the mistake.
 And now my readers it is all left to you,
 To judge my Marseillaise like song;
 And let me bid you a final adieu,
 And hope that I've done you no wrong.



CHAPTER, XI.

Arrival in Arkansaw.

AIR:—*De Broken Nose Horse.*

Farewell good folks, I'se gwine to leab you,
 Away into de lan' whar de cotton grow;
 'Tis true to start it does most grieb me,
 But Ise called an' I must go.
 Whar dare we'll chase de possum all de day,
 And den at night we'll frolic, don't you sees;
 Den all de care an' griep we'll dribe away,
 In de pleasure ob our festib jubilee!

AFTER my disappointment in the Flat, I went back down on the Big Muddy, and went to selling goods at auction, and stayed there one winter, and got tired of the business, and closed out. I would like to tell you some of the upwards and downwards that I went through during my stay; but space and time bids me pursue my task—relating my life in Arkansas. I often heard my brother and sisters speak of the rurality and backwood's style of some portions of the State, and had often re-

marked that a trick show would suit them. And now, that I had no other plan in view, and ready to take a trip, I was not long in deciding upon a journey into that State, to try my luck there. Now, reader, I have passed over many scenes and trials in my youthful life, and experiences in the beginning of my showman's life, to allow myself more space to describe to you a few of my varied performances, in my life of an "Arkansaw Showman." I have only given you a few examples of bad conduct and unfortunate circumstances, and hope, dear reader, that should any of my fellow mortals, attempt the profession of magical performances, for their field of labor, that they be more cautious in their outset than I have been in mine. And should this little volume fall into the hands of any one contemplating a voyage of like circumstances, and should it be the means of guidance and directory of any one to be forewarned of the trials and temptations, consequent solely on inexperience, I shall be amply repaid for all the pains I have taken to describe them. You see the state of affairs rendered upon my past life, and the only cause of my seclusive future in the backwoods and mountainous regions. I once had as high hopes and bright a future and road laid open to fortune and happiness any one could wish for; but alas! how strange our fortunes turn out; and I remain in this remote part of the world, with no pleasure, no comfort, or conciliation, save the memory of that loved one, far away, never to behold that beautiful image, nor hear that sweet voice, they still linger in the never lessening feelings of my imagination, to comfort me through my disconsolate destination. Ah, reader, have you experienced such feelings as to part forever, from the only one on this wide expanse, that you ever felt the only spark of heart-felt love? Have you ever loved a gal that didn't love you? have you ever stood by and seen your gal lean up to another feller, like an old cow leans against the South side of a straw stack in March? have you ever seen your gal frisk fondly around Jack, John, Phil or Ben, like a poodle dog suffering with an over gorge of fleas? and throw a cold distant glance at you at the same time, as much as to say—depart from my presence and stay there. Did you ever give a gal a ring, or picture, and she would sell them and buy candy with the money?

did you ever buy a gal candy, and then she'd give to another teler? did you ever buy a gal ear drops, shoes, dresses, bonnets, and aprons, and then she'd deny it, and say her big brother buyed them for her? You no doubt, think it strange, that I am asking such questions; but if you ever witnessed any of the foregoing circumstances, you, perhaps know something about the condition of my past sorrows. Strange indeed, that almost all writers of their on histories, are almost invariably blessed with the happy fortune, that their gals love them to the final end of their lives, which frequently is occasioned by their heart sickening love; but thanks be to the All-wise Creator, that I never was that kind of a murderer. All the murderous deeds I ever done, was in an old cabin in Arkansas, which will be described hereafter. Why could it not happen that my gal was devout like Doc Rattlehead's Mollie, Julia Dean's sister and others. But alas! 'tis so, and I'm giving a correct history, as they come before me. for I have no record of past events. To part with friends and relatives is sad enough; to think that you may never meet them again this side of Eternal rest; to take the parting hand with your kind mother, and say farewell mother, you may never see your son again; to leave the home of youthful days and seek your destiny in a land of strangers, is sad indeed, but to leave behind you, "the gal you love" is the saddest grief the human heart can feel. Yes reader, I am far from kindred friends, to soothe my sorrowful feelings, where none but those friends I have found since I have been in this wild rough region. But they are kind friends, and look upon me as their sole conspirator of fun, and they shall have my assistance, and best endeavor to make them happy. ' However, 'tis useless to lament for days that are past, and unwise to mourn over the loss of fortunes "that might have been" ours; 'tis over now and cannot be otherwise, nor do I regret my choice of life, for I do not wish to be in the noisy city, nor to be where I can see my gal happy in the love of some other wretch. I made up my mind to go and have never regreted it. After making a few preperations, I took the parting hand and started for Arkansas. I had a good horse, and for company, took a few of my smallest tricks, that would carry in my saddlebags. I

rode steady for a long distance, and stopped one evening at a very old looking plantation, and inquired if I could stay all night. The old man came out and said that if I could put with a thunderin' sight of fuss, I could stay. I told him I could put up with most anything that any one else could. He told me to get down and come in. I got off my horse and took my saddle bags on my arm and walked into the house. There was a number of pretty good looking gals and several boys there. Soon as they seen my saddlebags, one of them asked, "you're a doctor, are you?" I told them I was no doctor. "Well then I guess you're a preacher?" I said I was a preacher once, but was not preaching at present. They did not seem to be quite so familiar after telling them I was a preacher, but the gals tried to show out most tarnal "perlite" afterwards. I heard them whispering to one another, and wondering what to do with the preacher when the fiddler come. Pretty soon the old lady came in and told us supper was ready. We all went out into another log hut close by—my old plug hat for a bushel basket! what a good time we had for awhile. All sorts of good meat, chicken and gravy. After we had enjoyed a hearty repast, and a good talk with the gals, we went and fed my horse, and when we got back, the boy that had been across the country for a fiddler, had come back, and what loud talking they were having! He had got the fiddle and said that old Perry Slater was sick, and didn't think he could come, but said he would come if he got so he could. It was gettin time to commence their fun the boys and gals was in from every quarter, but no fiddler. They were walking the floor and looking for old Perry but he didn't come. Some said they be doggoned if they didn't learn to play the fiddle, and they was soon in a confusion. One of the gals said she expected the preacher was glad they had no fiddler. I waited awhile to see if their man would come, but seeing their expected performer was not coming, I asked one of them to let me see their violin; he looked liked something ailed him, but he went and got it, remarking that he did not know whether I ever saw one like it. I took it, tuned it up, and drew the bow across it and it sounded like a bass horn. I struck out on a familiar reel. I have seen the solemaizing min-

isters in earnest devotion; and seen still times, for instance, slipping up on a chicken roost or into a water melon patch, but if you ever seen still times it was then. I told them if they wanted me to, I would saw for them that night. They quickly agreed, and said they would pay me as much as was going to pay the old fellow that had disappointed them. Then there was a merry set, and they kept it up till towards midnight; then the gals said they would get supper. They got a lot of cold chicken, pies, and we went into the other room to take supper. One of the gals commenced on me for saying I was a preacher. I told her I had been one, and asked her why she accused me of not being a preacher. She said I was too good a fiddler, and said she would bet I could beat any one there, dancing; and had a notion to make me try it. I told her we had no fiddler, and we could not make it without. That settled settled it, and after we took a rest, we commenced fun again. Old Perry came in and they knocked out the set, and must hear old Perry play, to see how much he could beat the preacher. Perry declared that he did not come to play—he only come to see what was going on; but he had to try his hand, to show them the difference. They all said the preacher could beat him all into flinders. Then the gal who would bet on me, said I had to try it. I told her that I was out of practice and could not do much, but I told her I would try. She was gnawing on a chicken shank, when old Perry struck up a lively tune. She jumped up and grabbed me by the arm, and said to one of the gals, "Sall, hold my chicken leg, while I g'lant this preacher round, that's got these store breeches." Sall took it, and we commenced to cut it down right lively. We was going at full speed when she discovered that Sall was trying her incisors on the poultry leg. The door was open and I was dancing up like an old 'possum, the door was about two feet up off the ground. Kate kept looking back at Sall, and yelled, "Sall, if you eat my chicken leg, I'll come and choke it out of you." While they were conversing, Kate looking back, and me leaning against her, we went rolling and tumbling out at the door, nearly every one in the string was pulled after us. Such struggling was never seen since Eve tempted Adam to taste the apple. I

said it was Kate's fault, and she said it was my fault. She said I leaned against her so heavy, she had to sidle off till she got out of the ring, stumped her toe against the door sill. I said she was looking back, and I was trying to see what she was looking at. But as luck was in our favor, none of us was much wounded, except a skinned nose, a lame ankle, bruised elbows, bumped heads and stratched faces. The old man said he had seen hogs tied and put in a pile, and cats in a sack together, but he never sich a nother fuss made. We got straightened out and back into the house, and Kate proposed that we finish the set. I begged off, and said that I was too much out of practice to dance, and told them I thought best to have a little rest over our spludge. We got to talking about spirit mysteries and mediums. One of them said he "hearn of one that could spit fire on anything and burn it." I told him that was a strange kind of a medium, and that I could do that myself, and knew that I was no medium. "You, you, spit fire! I don't b'lieve thar ever was anybody that could spit fire!" I told him I didn't know about that, but I could take his handkerchief and spit on it and set it afire. A number of handkerchiefs was offered, but I told them it was a pity to burn good handkerchiefs like them was, and that I had some linen pieces in my saddle bags, and went to get my stuff to burn with. I said it was no use to burn anything that was good, and these pieces of linen would do as well. But they was afraid there was a trick about it, and said to try a handkerchief. I told them if nothing else would do, I could burn them into ashes, and they passed over a dozen or two, and told me to go in 'on 'em. I took a little of my phosphorus that was concealed in my hand, and said if I burned them, they had to stick to it. They said to go ahead, and burn them if I could. I got my phosphorus doubled up in one of the best ones, and began to pretend to spit and rub them together, and about the time they begin to think it was no go, it began to smoke and blaze like pine torch. The—go—eat—Solomon, what on arth kind of a fellow is he! There lay the remnants of the burned handkerchiefs, burned apparently with no element save what I spit upon them. Now they all wanted to know how it was done. I said I could not

tell them how it was done, but could do it every time. Kate said that I had something on that handkerchief, and I could not burn her apron that way. I said I could burn any combustible article. She wanted me to try it, and I took a little phosphorus and enveloped it in her apron and commenced the friction, and it began to smoke and blaze, and I tried to put it out, but it flamed like dry flax, and the way she made that short tailed frock pop around, was a sin to a nigger-in-law to Satan. She screamed fire! fire! put it out, jirk it off,—throw water on it, oh-wah-eehuh and down she came like a sheep with the blind staggers. Every one in the house was pulling at her clothes, and she was squalling worse than a hen with a possum hold of her neck. I really think it took 20 seconds to empty a barrel of water onto Kate! and nearly every one was wet as a drowned beaver. In their excitement they tore off nearly every shred of Kate's clothes, and left her almost as bare as a shorn wether. I made mention of my sincere sorrows for being so rude; but every one there, and Kate too, said it was her fault, and it would learn her not to try any more such tricks. Next morning we found that Kate had not received much injury, and after taking a good breakfast, I began to inquire what part of Arkansas would be the most desirable place that a man could go to interest the people with a sleight of hand or trick show. "Why good Gracious partner," says the old gentleman, "if you want to find a place where people love fun an' frolicin' you're in as good a place as you'll find in Arkansaw." While studying whether to hunt out a location in the bluffs, or go to the big Arkansaw bottoms, I was informed that the hills as they was called, was the best situation, and learned also, that it was only a day and a half's ride to the bottoms. I told the old gentleman if he had no objection, I would like to put up there until I rested myself and horse and looked at the country.

Why my bless your life, you're as welcome here, as you'll ever be in any home in Arkansaw. We're a jolly set, but we mean no harm by it. You kin stay as long as you like our ways.

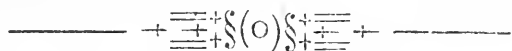
I told him I had been hunting such a place, and that I was ready to go into such fun as himself or family wanted me to help in. After discussing a few matters and telling a few jokes that happened the previous night, the old gentleman wanted to know my name. I told him I was the notable PROFESSOR AL-

LEHUE SHACKLEFOOTE. "Great sakes ! where did you get so much name ? what is the 'Professor' for ?" I said I was a professor of the magical art, and asked what his name was. "Well it ain't as long as your's, it is JERY WELLS" We walked around looking at things, and I asked if there wasn't lots of coons and possums there.

Well now you're talking like General Jackson, if there ain't more coons and possums in these hollers than there's niggers in the Arkansaw bottoms, you may say I never seen neither.

That evening the boys wanted to know if I wanted to take a coon chase. I told them I would not care to go out with them they said they did not care about being out late. They gathered their hounds, guns, pistols and horns, and away we went down a hollow that led into a valley of heavy timber. We had not proceeded far till the lead hound set up a hideous yaw-yaw and of all the yells, whoops, whoo-ees ever heard in Arkansas, it was there. They went all in a bunch tarin' thro' the woods like a herd of buffalos. They soon came upon a hollow tree, and stopped. What was to be done, they had forgotten their axe and how was they to get it. I told them we could burn it down, but they said they had no fire or matches. I said we could burn it down anyhow. "Yes you will, you wont find it as easy to burn as Kate Wells' apron ! You can't spit enough fire to set that tree on fire." I got some paper out of one of their shot pouches and took some phophorus and began rubbing them, and pretty soon had it all aflame. They were astonished at this operation and began to think I was a wonderful fellow. They piled on wood till they had a flame rolling to the top of the tree, and the first thing we knew, a great big skunk cat, as big as Davy Crocket, came down and the hounds mounted him as soon as he reached the earth. We all rushed up in the dark without knowing what it was, to see what was being done when the old fellow begin perfuming us. Multiplications of miseries, what a fix we were in, and could do nothing. We was besprinkled with the very stoutest sweet savory mortal nose ever smelled ! We made a big fire and stayed till morning and went to the creek and take a morning bath before going home. Where—away—now—bind me on th back with a broo nstick, pound me over the poll with a potato pounder, and

poke me in the nose with a persimmon pole. Here we had another cent's worth of scent sent us !



CHAPTER, XII.

My First Show in Arkansaw.

Air:—*Raccoon sop and possum jelly.*

Away down in old wild Arkansaw,
Where there they heed not any one ;
Neither care for man nor law,
Nor nothing else but sport and fun.
Where here we have our sport and spree,
And all is happy and all is gay,
In frohes, coon hunts and drunken spr es.
Where here we can have them any day.

YOU no doubt will deride me for thus describing my arrival in Arkansaw—as the first thing was a coon hunt, and to show you how completely I took them in, on the start with my fire works, and how any one here in our land of fun and frolic, must be up to every game. I have never found more faithful friends than the Wells family. They have ministered to my every wishes. The first night I stopped for a night, but finding them so kind, I have been contented to stay here in this remote portion of our great universe, and shall, perhaps stay until the final end yes, till death shall cease my existence, and take me to a happier realm, where we shall live together throughout eternity, where no lovers will prove untrue, and cause those wreaking pains to live and torment us as mine have done. This family consisted of as clever hearted as any country has been blessed with. A father and mother, three daughters, and two sons. Katie, Susie and Nellie, were the names of these sisterly maidens, and George and Warran were the names of their brothers. Should you ever pass through this portion of the country, you will know them by their kindness. I often wished for freedom from that gal that drove me from my native land and home ; from the society I loved so dear, and wounded my heart with such feelings that I can never feel any love for any one else. For if I could have the freedom of heart, I'd be happy in the society of Katie, Nellie, Susie and others. But I must leave off my laining and proceed to my subject of showing in Arkansaw. George went with me to hunt a school but

away down in Porcupine hollow, for my first show in Arkansas, and after seeing the managers, obtained permission, and went round to several neighbors, told them our intentions, and left several bills. Let me say to those unfamiliar with showing in the backwoods, that we do not stick our bills in saloons or cross-roads, for if we did they would seldom be seen, for it would be recognized as some sort of a humbug. But here we go to several of the biggest families in the neighborhood, and have a friendly talk, and failure is seldom known under such arrangements. For in this way, you get the good-will of the family and people in general, and the good-will be true-to-death-forever with the gals. And what is more pleasant than to go round and be introduced to the family and gals. as the heroic Showman, that's "goin' to have a show at Porcupine school house to-morrow night. Going to have a splendid time, want every one of you to come; good ventriloquist, staven good fiddler; wonderful fire eater, good jig dancer, lots of funny tricks, can burn anything by spittin fire on it, lives at our house, we're all going; Sall, you and Bets must come, Kate and Nell's a goin', we're goin' to have lots of fun. You bet your old straw hat we're goin' to go, we're your wild goose on a thing like that, that's the kind of fun we like." You see about how flattering a kind of people I had found, and they have been as true and continuous as they were in the begining. We returned to Mr. Wells, and told them we had succeeded in getting a situation and was going to perform next night. They had many friends about their settlement, and on the evening of our appointed time, a number of boys and gals were collected at their house to go with us to the show. But let me remind you, after seeing the roads or paths through the brakes, I concluded to construct my fixtures so as to be carried on horse back, and found it much easier to do, than it could be done in the place where I paid so dearly for the education of a showman's knowledge, for here, with a little phosphorus, a little burned cotton in a small tube, and a few small tricks, I can give a better performance, at least amuse the people better, than I could in the north-west, with enough plunder to make a saw mill. I got Warren to ride my horse and carry my budget of tricks. and I

took it a foot, with the boys and gals. Nell, Susie and all the gals had a feller with them but Kate, and she sidled back towards me, till I axed her if we hadn't just as well do a little courten as the rest of the boys and gals. She said she didn't see but what we might, and we talked as we went along, about as agreeable as a politician does to a voter, until we reached the Porcupine school house, a mile-and-a-half down the hollow and found a splendid crowd awaiting our arrival. George took in the fare at the door, while I and Warren put things in order. The house was filled with men, women, boys, gals and children. I opened the performance by introducing a trick, consisting of an apple cut into slugs like a candle, with some bitter almond in the end so it would burn. I took some pieces of candles and showed them to the company, and went back and lighting the ends of the almond, I commenced: Ladies and Gentlemen; during my travels through the Russian Empire, I learned like the Russians, to be very fond of tallow candles, that I have a great relish for them. I began to cram the apple-candles down me. They set up a terrible laugh. "Now Kate, you've got the one you want, you've found him at last—you can feed him on taller." I thought it was going to be the same old song that I heard in the plow house, but they soon cooled down to a chuckling laugh, to find their showman crammin' taller candles down. I had to go through the fire performance, and they all began to tell Kate to lookout for her apron. I spit on and burned several pieces of paper, linen and divers articles, and then blowed fire from my mouth. This I accomplished by filling a small tube with scorched cotton, and setting a fire and putting it in my mouth, I could cause brilliant sparks of fire, and clouds of smoke to issue from my mouth! My old blue blouse, how that did astonish them. They thought I must be some sort of a wizzard, and said that I must be a second o. third cousin to the old "bad boy." Some one said I must have a hard mouth to stand that fire. "Yes" says of them, "Kate you'll have to pull mighty hard if your show man tries to run away. I then proposed to show them a most remarkable trick, telling them I had a ring that I could pass through one's cheek without injury. I told them if any of them would come up, I

would pass it through their cheek and knock it on a stick. I showed them the solid ring, and asked some of them to come and let me show them how it was done. They said there was no one there fond of trying tricks, unless Kate Wells wanted to try some more like she did the fire trick. But Kate didn't want to try any more. I finally succeeded in getting a great big lunny looking, thick headed, fuzzy faced lad of about 17, to come and allow me to try my pluck on him. His name was Bill Smith, and the whole Smith family was there. I got my ring and stick, sponge and polk berry juice, and showed them the solid ring, and had Bill to walk out before the crowd. When Bill walked out to where I wanted him, he would not have been worse scared if I had been fixing to shoot him. He looked like the last sad summons had come, and he was going to leave us. The old man Smith said, "now don't git skerd Billy, stan' to it like a man, be brave Billy." I took the sponge with polk berry juice and fixed the ring and held it up towards the crowd to show them it was the iron ring. I got my sponge in the right place, and gave it a little squeeze just as I put the ring in its place, I had Bill's jaw to all appearance bleeding like a stuck hog. Just as I put the ring seemingly through his meat and bread mill, gave him a little scratch with a pin so as to make him more positive that the ring was actually through. He happened to discover the polk-blood streaming down his jaw, and feeling it smart, he commenced one "frothin spells" as the old man Smith called it. Farewell to fair face and Fanny Cathom such rearing and plunging was never seen since Jonah stayed all night in the whale! * * Bill lay struggling and frothing at the mouth—the old man was rolling up his sleeves and swearing he would whip the hide off that darned showman, the old woman screaming "what has he done to Bill, drat his hide, he knowed Bill wasn't able to stand sich." The old man said he had a 'frothin spell' on him, and I was the cause of it. The Smith gals said I had killed Bill, and he was swabbed in polk berry juice, till he looked like he had been stabbed under the fifth rib. I got hold of Bill to raise him up, and the S. gals began to scream for some body to knock him down. The old woman seized the broom, and commenced belaboring me over

the back, Jane Smith was slashing me with her bennet, Sall Smith got the fire shovel, and was making for me, but some one stopped her. By this time I had succeeded in getting the bucket which was nearly full of water, and slap-slash it went in the faces of the old woman and girls. The water splashed all over Bill and brought him to his consciousness, and having sort of a cooling impression on the combatants, the middle sorter ceased. I told them I hadn't done anything to the big stoten bottle, that no blood was drawn, and explained the thing. The old man said that Bill was given to such spells, and he seen the blood and didn't know what was up, and the gals a hollerin' made him act as he had. The gals said they thought I had cut Bill's throat, and the old woman thought he was killed certain. And now the floor was wet, and the curtains down, we concluded to scatter in bunches. We packed up and all put out well pleased with the performance, unless it was the Smith family. I think they must have felt chilly with their dampened clothes on. Kate kept close to me, and just as I took hold of her fat arm, a gal come up and said, "Kate, I want you and Sues and all of you to come over to our house and fetch your snowman with you, we're going to have some fun." We struck out for home and was not long in reaching it, considering the distance. When we went to scatter at Mr. Well's, they made it up to meet there the next night to go over to old widder Snyder's to a cotton picking. Next morning Nell and Sues had a good time running the joke on me for taking such a pounding with Jane Smith's bonnet. Towards evening, the crowd of boys from all parts of the neighborhood began to collect at the residence of Mr. Wells, and several gals too, to go together to our place appointed by Miss Snyder to have some fun. I started it going with Kate, and she appeared to think I must keep it up, and as she was as good looking as any gal in the hollows, I could have no cause to refuse her. And so we locked our arms as tight together as two old wethers does their horns in a combat, and started for the widow Snyder's. I want to describe the scene after reaching our destiny. We found a log hut of good size, and close by a very large house of the same substantial make-up, although not fitted up on the inside as the other, it being

used to smoke meat in, &c., and get drunk inst of rainy days whenever Bob Snyder come home from out of the cotton picking country in the bottoms. Here we found a good pine knot fire in the middle of the place where the floor ought to be, with a ring of new cotton around it as large as a roll of featherbeds. The old lady made some excuses about having the fire made in such a place, and added that it was rather early for picking cotton, but it is a little dab that she was in a hurry to get picked, in time for her to get some cotton truck made soon. We pitched into it like a preacher into a chicken pie, and it was 11 before we got done. Some one proposed to have a little fun by way of a civil play. The old lady told us we could do jist as we pleased. She said she had been looking for her son Bob home all that day, and it might be he would come that night. All set to playing 'roosters' and such another fuss was never heard since Queen Isabelle had the hurdy-gurdy. Hello in thar was heard in thunder tones. "What's that noise about" said a stalwart red whiskered fellow as he tottered in. Hello, Bob, that you, been to the Still-house have you. I have. Got plenty of'er with me, too, here it is boys, now go in on it, and gals every one of yous got to drink with me, you haint tasted a drop with me since we was all down at Smith's. What's my gal Jane a doin', why aint she here. A description of the battle between me and Jane in Porcupine school house was given, then I was introduced to Bob as Prof. Shacklefoote. Bob wanted to know if I was the fire eater he heard about at the Still-house. They told him I was the one. "Well, I've got to see it tried." I told him I would rather not undertake it there, that some one might get hurt. Nothing would do but I must try it. I got some pieces of truck and commenced the work, and he wanted to see how it was done, and told me to get some paper and let him hold it, so he could see how it was done. I seen some thing had to be done to get shut of him. I always had a little powder that I used in my fire department. I told him that I had to go out and get some paper to try on. I went out of doors and rolled up about two (?) ounces of powder in a piece of newspaper and went back in and told Bob I was ready to show him the trick, I told him to take the paper and hold it as

he liked, and I would burn it out of his hand. He took the paper and said, I'm going to see how it is done. I told him to hold it up close so he could see it go off. He held it pretty close to his face, I told him to be careful or it would serve him like it did Kate. "No siree, I'm too old a hound to be fooled by a fox," says he. I commenced rubbing the paper and phosphorus together and it began to smoke and Bob began to look closer. His whiskers were 6 or 8 inches long, and he held it up till it almost touched his chin, and was looking earnestly at it—when out went the whole load in his face, which set his whiskers blazing like a greased candle wick! He fell back and kicked the bench over that several boys and gals were seated on, * * * The boys and gals had taken about as much of Bob's liquor as they could get along with, and it was some time before they all got straight. When they all got up, Bob commenced on me for doing so. I told him I had done as he told me to do, and Kate said it was his fault, like she was with her apron, and we soon got him in a good humor. Kate told him Jane Smith would like him better with his whiskers off anyhow. Before we left some one said that would be a good house to have a show in, and we agreed to have one there next Tuesday night and we departed for our respective places of resting. Go way Gals—Wanted—By Shacklefoote—Ten maidens that does not want to marry; ten men that does not like liquor; ten women that does not want to be the master, ten boys that does not like a pistol; ten children that does not like to see the preacher coming to stay all night, and ten babies that does not resemble their pa. by a new bride!

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 CHAPTER XIII.
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Getting Greased.

AIR:—*Carry Me back to Rockensack.*

If I were young again once mo'
 I would try to be better pleased,
 I would try no more to show—
 I would try to keep from being greased,
 But now *hard times* has got me fast,
 I cannot do anything but show anyway;
 So carry me back and do it fast,
 For it's Rockensack I'd e gwine to stay.—*Harry Long hungry.*

BOB Snyder come over next day and told us he had decided on having a frolic after the show, and said he wanted me to play the fiddle. He said he would prepare the dirt floored house for me to show in, as it was the biggest, and have the dance in the house with the puncheon floor. He said he was going to have the best time ever known on pin-oak point. He said he was going to have plenty of liquor and provisions. I thought as Bob was so much interested and would have such a crowd there, I would try and get up something extra. I had no way of carrying many extras, nor had no time to make such things. I remembered how highly they had spoken in wonder about spirit mediums, and thought a performance of that kind would be amusing to them. I got a pair of boots and stuffed the feet with cotton, then got one of Nellie's white gloves and stuffed it; got some rope, a tamborine and as much other tricks as I could. We arrived in good time and found a good crowd there and more coming. You may accuse me of stretching the blanket, about so many people coming to a show when I had one, here in Arkansaw, but people don't think any more of going 8 or 10 miles to a show or dance than of going to mill, and besides, when one goes they all go. We found the house neatly fitted up, and Becky Snyder flying around like a hawk over a henhouse. We fixed our tricks and took in the fare, and all were anxious to see things go off. I commenced with the fire works which were always first called for. I performed the routine of other tricks, and told them I would show them a few spirit mysteries, which seemed to please them better. I told them the room had to be darkened so I could call forth the spirit medium workings. It took sometime to get the pine knots in the center of the house to cease their brilliantness and the hog fat lamps to cease their strength, but by and by we got them toned down to the desired point, and then I told them I would show them a human hand waving in the air. I took Nellie's glove that was stuffed with cotton and put it on a long wire, and got behind the curtain and reached the wire over the curtains and waved it over their heads. There was light enough to see the "hand" but not enough to see the wire, and thus they were puzzled. Some declared they saw its finger nails. I took a

rope and put it between my arms and let one of them tie my hands together with a handkerchief and then pull on the rope to see that it was tight, and hold to the ends of the rope. I had him to slacken the rope so I could work it. I worked it down till I could get my finger up through the tied handkerchief and pull the loop of the rope through it so I could get my hand through the rope, then slipped it back and it was off. Then they thought I was a wonderful medium. I told them I was going to perform the most wonderful feat of any. I told them I would show them a pair of real human feet floating in the air, and I would stand among them to show that I had no magical power nor fixing about it. The curtains was down and I took the boots and put a pair of stocking over them, and had two small rods to suspend them on, and had Nellie to get ready to operate the boots. I wanted her to stand up high, so she could reach over their heads with the boots, and had to fix something for her to stand on. The light being out, I fumbled round and found a barrel with boards laying over it, and thought was a good platform for Nellie. I went to help her on the barrel, and I think she was as heavy a piece of woman flesh as I ever took hold of, and I made a stagger back, and Nellie grabbed the barrel and over we went together in a pile. Farewell to fun and frolic! and you find me in it again—a barrel of soap, and I and Nell rolling like we were trying to wash it off; but it was not as easy to get off as it was to get on. Poor Nell, I did not care so much for myself, but there was poor little Nell, * * * They soon had Nellie's clothes changed, and Bob got me a suit of clothes, and I offered to pay the old lady for her soap, but she thought I had paid dear enough for it already. This broke up the show, and to console Nellie, I promised her the nicest dress in Briggs' store, and the first time we went there, we got it. We receded into the other house and proceeded with the dance, and I cheered them with lively music, and all was merrymen as a marriage bell. This time old man Slater was here, and I had a chance to take a part in the frolic, when it was not my time to play. While some were dancing, others were in the other house, telling tales, and singing songs, with a good pine knot fire in the center of the house and roasting taters. * * *

I went in the smoke house and asked Becky Snyder to dance with me, while Slater was playing. She had a fine lot of roasted sweet taters in her apron, and she told me if I would wait till she eat her taters she would dance with me, and told me to sit down and partake of the taters. We enjoyed the roast and soon banished the taters in Beck's apron and went in the other house to have a little dance. Beck told Kate to jist see how she was going to make that showman's store clothes pop around Kate told her she had no business meddling with that showman for she had the oldest claim on him. Beck said she wanted to see if she would get into as many scrapes as she had. The music began and now we go into it like a dog in a sheep house. We knocked off the first set quicker nor you could eat a fried herring. Beck said Shacklefoote was the best dancer there, and Jane Smith said Bob was the best dancer, and Beck disputed it, and bloody ruckshun soon ensued. You never seen such scratching and hair pulling since Daniel slept in the lion's den. I caught hold of Beck to pull her off of Jane, and some one got hold of Jane and pulled her back, and she was so mad that she kept kicking and in trying to get away from Jane, I pulled her back till we got over the loose puncheons, and when Jane said something to Beck, if you ever seen a wild mule in harness, you know about how she acted, and one of the puncheons turned over and that gave room for about half a dozen of them to push away, and down I and Beck went through the vacancy into Bob's potato pit under the floor, and what do you reckon we found? The old lady Snyder had rendered out a large kettle of beef tallow, and put it under the floor to keep Bob's hounds out of it, and when we went down my foot landed on the rim of the kettle and over it come, and such a greasing as we got was a credit to cripple toads, and the way Beck threatened Jane was enough to raise a blister on a cow's horn. Beck did not get as bad greased as I did, and it was not long till we were in a fix to go to work dancing again. Jane Smith took care not to say much to Beck about the best dancer, for she wasn't wont to be master. We finished our set and several others, and took a recess. While we were amusing ourselves telling yarns and singing songs, some of the gals and Mrs. Sny-

der was getting supper ready, for they had a large crowd to accommodate, and while they were talking some one proposed to sing a song for Mr. Shacklefoote, and I urged them to go ahead, that I wanted to hear it. Then Susie Wells and several others commenced, and for the benefit of my northern friends I will give you the song as they sang it, thus:

Come all you Northern gals, and listen to my noise,
And never do you marry the Arkansaw boys,
For if you do your fortune it will be—
||: Cold Johnny cake and venison, for supper you will see.:||
For when they go courting, what do they wear?
An old brown coat all pitched with tar!
An old straw hat more brim than crown,
||: The same that they've wore all the year round.:||
When they go to farming what do they plow?
An old muly ox or old poor cow,
The weeds are so thick you can't see the ground,
||: The corn is so little that it cannot be found.:||
They have no convenient way to bake bread,
They'll build up a fire as high as your head,
The sticks are so crooked they wont lay on,
||: And then their pots comes tumbling down.:||
Their houses are furnisked very bad indeed,
An old hickory chair and a pole bedstead;
An old board roof and a clap-board door,
||: An old stick chimney and a puncheon floor.:||
And when they go milking they milk in a gourd,
They sit it in a corner and cover with a board:
The dog and the cat are sure to get a share,
||: And that is the way they do it up here.:||
And now to conclude with my Arkansaw song,
The coonny and 'possum and dog they take along;
The nigger and the hound and all that makes fun,
||: And that is the way of the Arkansaw run.:||

Susie said it was warning to northern boys as well as girls, and I told Susie that I wanted her to write it down for me, which she did afterwards and the above is a true copy of the ballad she wrote me. Supper being announced, ready, we all made our way to the other house to try our faculties of mastication, on a fine roasted goose that Bob had prepared for his guests. I had began to be quite intimate with the whole company, and when they got ready to commence their incision, there was not one in the house that was willing to undertake the carving. They all put it on to me to do the work. I told them I had never done much of the like, but could try. I commenced on the old gander, and endeavoring to make them think I had been hold of game before, I seized a smooth edged butcher knife, and went to sawing on the old fellow's organ for swim-

ming, but the knife slid over it as easy as a nigger's tooth goes through a possum leg. I began to bear down harder and saw faster, and grunt and sweat and wipe my face with my sleeve, and drew it nearer to bear harder. Jane Smith began to snigger and grin like a vile possum. I had him on the tin plater and was giving him my best licks—when the gander flopped on the floor and the tin pan went like a circular saw, and I had lost my balance on the fowl and he gave me the slip. I made a spring at him to save him from the jaws of a hound that was under the table, and when he seen the gander light he made for him, and fastened on the principle part of the supper, as I nailed the old gander's leg, and began toeing the hound in the ribs and soon had him loose, but he didn't feel well over his disappointment, and took me by the leg to see how it felt. I began to kick with the other leg until he tripped under the table, and then there was a crash, like a glassware and queensware store over my head, and the contents lay in every direction which scared the hound out and ended the battle. More—Straw—turn me into the cane brakes—drive into the mill pond—gin me in a cotton gin—grind me up in a brig mill, to be built upon in the future!

CHAPTER XIV.

Stealing a sheep and standing the trial.

AIR:—Save the Wool.

The night was dark, the house was full,

And every one was interested deep;

To see a sight so wonderful,

As to turn a man into a sheep.

Hark! the Officer is at the door,

"What have I done?" You're guilty of larceny.

I'll try a score on them once more,

And whip them out with sword and halstery!

SINCE my ill-fatedness at Snyder's I have been more successful and cautious, and after several performances where I was stopping, I wanted to get farther off. I got on my horse and rode 8 or 10 miles down the valley, where they were thickly settled and seemed to be from 8 to 12 at every house, I obtained a house in the Hideout settlement, and having some of my old bills that had the feat of "cutting a man's head off," I

handed out some to get up an excitement. I thought it best to try to find some one to help me play the trick, but could find no one. I returned to Mr. Wells' and told Warran I had tried every one in the settlement to help me with the trick. He told me I would have a worse set to deal with than the Smiths were and that the Hideouts were the simplest people in the State, and that anything would excite them to death, almost certain. He said we could get a sheep or anything and they would not know the difference. George had gone into the cotton country and I had no one to help me out but Warren. The road was a better than usual, and we took the old man's two horse spring wagon, to make them think we had a big show. While driving along and talking about how we would get out of our advertisement, we noticed a herd of sheep, and Warren suggested and insisted that we catch one and wrap it in our sheets and we could play it on them just as well as if we had a man to lay on the box for us. I did not fancy sheep stealing, and told him we might be caught in the attempt and sent to Jack's house to work out our fine. Warren said there was no danger, that they belonged to old Hideout, and hadn't sense enough to but that it was our sheep, if he should see us with it. He seemed so confident and resolute, that I about half way consented to his plan and when he saw I would allow him, he took a rope halter, and started to take in a new partner. Great gallinippers! how little I did feel. I thought what would the folks back in Daviess think when they heard of me being arrested for stealing sheep. What if it should reach the ears of "Tom?" not that I thought she would care, but that I had always tried to keep myself a pure and innocent person for her sake. I did not try very hard to catch the wether, but Warren was running him, and he finally got him, and as little as if I was kidnaping. We took him and tumbled him in the wagon and covered him with a sheet. Here we went, hauling an innocent wether tied and covered from prying eyes, and we hastened to our stopping place, and deposite our captive behind the "scenes" before any one come, and we were just in time. I felt as spotted as a leopard, to see so big a crowd, depending on seeing a wether exhibited for amusement. I told them I would show them all the wonderful

feats of magic, but did not know that I could show the trick of catting a man's head off, for the man I had employed to cut his head off was sick and I was unwilling to try it on him, as it was a dangerous job at any rate. I went through the fire works and several other tricks of desception, and had them deeply interested before commencing the bloody deed of vile wolfish slaughter. We packed out a big box to stand, and do as little a trick as grown people ever done. Julius Czars how bad I felt! Enforcing a little extra courage, we laid him on the box and informed them that our old fellow was very sick and I believed he had the cholerae, and he was very stupid and could scarcely move, but if they wished to see the thing I would go ahead with it, and that he wouldn't live long anyway, and that I had attended on cases of cholerae, and felt sure he had a spasmodic cramp on him already, and will not last long. Just as I finished my tale he began to kick under the blanket, and I told them he was dying with the cholerae. They rolled over one another worse than boys running out of a water melon parch, when they heard a dog bark, knocked the stove down, threw fire all over the house and tore things up generally. When we was into it the hardest, "bah-a-a-a" went the old wether, loud enough to deafen a donkey. "Jist listen at that poor man a hollerin', he's sufferin' awful, let's run over and tell old Hide-out to come over, he's sort of a doctor," and away they went to get a doctor to see our woolly patient. But while they were gone I told them a good physician had stopped at Mr. Wells, and we must hurry up and get him there. I had the wagon ready, and we rolled him into the wagon, and slung everything in and hit the road. When we come to where we thought we got him, we stopped to release our prisoner. But it was so dark you could not tell a sheep from a negro except by the smell, and we had started a fire to see how to get off the rope—hark! I heard a noise like the rushing of a mighty wind, the whole fowl and brute creation was in a disturbed condition. "We're followed by the fellows that went for the doctor," says Warren and I hardly had time to think, when he made a lick to cut the rope, and struck him in the wrong place which soon released him from trouble, and we struck for the wagon, and the cracking

of the brush scared our horse and off they went! Our team were rattling away, the sheep was doomed to travel the lonely road that all unfortunate sheep must travel, and the pursuers were evidently on our trail, and no doubt would follow on after finding the dead wether, which would be no trouble as our fire was still burning. Oh, what a fool I was for not putting the fire out before we left, but we felt more like flight than fight. They began to howl, then every specie of the canine race set their musical organs in tune. I told Warren we must secrete ourselves or they would find us, and there was no use trying to resist that troop of dogs, and we found a leafy tree top, and ascended the biggest limb we found, and had not much more than found a good perch, till we was entertained by a herd of dogs from every tribe listed at the dog house. What was to become of us? for they continued their ferocious howling, and we heard another shrill cry of encouragement to their noble band in the distance; we knew we would never get away if they ever reached us, and felt sure they had found the dead wether and I had made up my mind if they found us, they would shoot us off our roost as quick as if we had been two turkey gobblers. We were again aroused by deafening whoops which filled the surrounding forest. I seen escape was imposible, and began to think in real earnest. Oh! thought I, if this is my fate, to be shot out of a tree for murdering a wether that would not make more than 50 pounds of mutton which could be bought in Arkansaw at 4 cents per lb. I would have given my showing out fit and territory in Arkansaw to have been out of it. How simple we had been for pursuing our course, but there was dogs enough to track us into China! I did not fear death so much as I despised to die the ignominious death of a sheep thief. What a sad scene it would be for Katie, Nellie and Susie, to behold their brother, and their parents, their son—and Kate's true love hauled in, a lifeless corpse. I began to think if it should reach the ears of "Tom," and my heart did pound like the last sad sound of the churn dasher. I heard one or a dozen say at one time, "let's set'er a fire and smoke 'em out, what d'ye say?" It was agreed on and went to building the fire near us. I expected they would spy us out, when the fire was started, but we were

securely hidden, as the leaves were very thick. But our worst fear had not developed, for the leaves were dry and would blaze like a candle. The light began to shine, we heard the sticks and leaves cracking, and the curling smoke greeted us, as it ascended. I thought of every Indian massacre I ever read or heard tell of. The flames were increasing, the crowd hissing, the dogs yelping and the fowl and brute creation, including a braying institution, were trying to tear their lungs out. Oh, horror upon horrors! a few more short moments, and we will be scorched, and—and—away we go! But instead of it being our tree top, it was a stump close by, and when it fell, such a cry has not been heard since Samson slew the Phillistines. It was a silly 'possum that was fearless enough to approach a her roost and to carry off a hen that squalled so loud and betrayed his presence, which led to his capture. They soon had him dead as a dried coon skin, and began say what a fine roast they would have, and what a lesson they had taught him, and shouldered their game and pulled for home. Gracious, how good we did feel! We crawled down and started to find our team. It sorter reminded me of my trip with Big Bill, on Hickory Creek, only worse. By some lucky omen we found the road, and to our happy surprisement, we found our horses fast on a stump, by the road. We soon got them all right and reached home. About ten the next morning we went up in the upper most part of the cabin to recuperate, and was doing nice snoozing when Susie came up and told there was a crowd waiting to see us. When we went down, we found 8 or 10 as big men as ever settled in Arkansaw, and I asked what they wanted. The leader took a paper from his pocket, and commenced trying to read it. He said he didn't b'lieve he could read it. I told him to let me see it, and he handed it to me, and it read: *Perfesser Shakelfut, you are herefore demanded to come before me, dead or alive to anser a charge fur sheep steelen.* JOHN HIDEOUT, ESQ.

We went to old Hideout's and they asked: "What did you do with that sheep you had in your wagon?" I told him we had no sheep in the wagon, it was a sick man, and had the choleraæ, and we took him to one of his friends and sent him home. "Who killed that old wether by the side of the road last night?" I said I knew nothing about it, it might have been a wolf or dog.

"Yes, and it might have been a showman, and we think it was you." I said if he could prove it, I would bear it. He said he would put the trial off till Saturday night, and bind in a \$25.00 bond to be on trial. We gave him the money, and said we would come and see him on the appointed time. I had knife constructed so as to allow the blade to slide up in the handle, and fixed a small sponge in the end of the handle, so when filled with any red fluid and pressing the blade up, it would flow out. I loaded my "holster" with a paper wad and had everything ready to have a little fun out'en it. When the day arrived, we found the 'Squire ready to put the case in progress. I got around the old fellow and told him we had come to stand our trial and wanted our money back before we went any farther, and it had to come or we would raise war instanter. He agreed to dish her up if we would pay our fine. I told him we would pay it, if found guilty. He gave it up and called up the trial. He had 2 attorneys and I had one of their fellows on my side. His prosecuting counsellor got up and open suit:

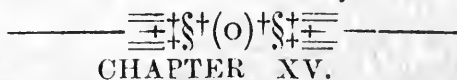
Well Gentlemin: I'm not uset to pleadin' law, an' guess you'll excuse me ef I don't do like other lawyers, but any how we've got these fellers here, charged with stealin' an' killin' one of our nabur's sheep, an' we've got to try 'em, accordin' to law. The sheep was found dead, an' its throat cut with a knife, an' its thought they done it, an' of course they done the deed, he wasn't mor'n dead next mornin' when John found him an' their wagon track hadn't near died out.

"Shut your mouth, we know they killed him and we want to know how much fine they'll have to pay," said the Squire. I got up and asked where the evidence was that we had killed it. I told him we denied the allegation and had the preponderance of evidence to prove that no one seen us with the sheep that no one seen us lay violent hands upon it, that no one heard us utter a word malice towards him and therefore we claimed to be innocent of the charge. His other foggy got up and said:

Well gentlemin, its jist this much about it, ef they didn't kill the sheep, they killed the man what had the collery, an' every body says that showman is a witch and can do anything he wants to, and how do we know but that they killed that man and turned him into a sheep. They say he kin do such things, and I b'lieve he has done sich a trick with that man. My partner-in-law got up and said, Gentlemen of the jury, Honorable Squire and Judge:—Ef I were you I'd fine that man a treat of apple jack for this whole court, the first time we ketek him at a shootin' match, for attemptin' this court. I'd be ashamed to talk to a set of cotton pickers that way, let alone this court. How do you know they had erry man, they might a jist said that to git shet of us. I think you'd better agree to treat an' we'll let you off.

They got into a quarrel. My lawyer was called Dick, and the

two prosecutors was Jack and Bill. Dick told Jack that was'n't half as bad as he had done, even if it had been proven on us, as he had knowed of him doing. He said he knowed of him stealin' 3 sides of meat out of Simpkins' smoke house, and Bill said he couldn't talk, for he made a regular business of stealin' and jist as like as any way he killed the one we's lawin' about. Shut your mouth says Hideout, let me tell you all: the sheep was killed and we are bound to have pay for him, and that showman and Wells boy was the only wagon that was here, and they must have killed it. Bill got up and said that him and a lot of other fellers was coming from the show and heard the loudest racket ever heard in the Hideout settlement, and when they got home they started out some of their dogs and they were follerin' up, and run on the sheep bleedin' from the wound, but wasn't dead, and there was a fire close by, and we must have done it. I told him it might have been us, and might have been Sam Slick, or Davy Crocket, but we wanted to know positively who done the crime. Jack said it was plain enough that we done it, and him and Dick got into it again. Dick got vexed and bantered Jack out, and being a little slow and kept tantalizing Dick till he poked him in the eye, and they yoked over the Squire's head. Bill ran up to take hold of Dick and some one caught him and hurled back. I seen now was the time to try my scare. Dick and Jack raised it and was taking it Irish-wake fashion. Bill come running up to help Jack, and I leveled my holster pistol at him, and fired. Such another has not been heard in the Hideout settlement. I struck at him with my knife, and the blood apparently flew all over him, and he fell like a beef in a slaughter pen, and I and Warren made for the door and thus got out of the sheep stealing. The court was adjourned without notice. Good-night, the eve is wanning fast, and I must have rest, I need it and I think you'll agree with me.



CHAPTER XV.

*The Negro Show and Nigger Dance.*AIR:—*De Niggah hoedown.*

When first I struck dis niggah land,
 And set me out to show;
 Mine heart was light and happy in de plan,

But soon got tired out you know.
 I'm thinking of the time,
 Of the good old time we seen in Dixie's land;
 But no mo' we'll see de happy days,
 Dat we seed in Arkansaw.
 When de durkies used to gadder on de lee,
 When de happy voices mingled,
 As dey gathered round in joys;
 And singing of deir songs of jubilee.

I FEEL as if I had been guilty of the charge alleged to me, in the last chapter, for I fear you have given your opinion of the case, but there is no way of getting out en it, and therefore, wish to impress your minds that, I am not giving you a popular flavored up story of my life. But instead, I have endeavored to give a few of the guiltiest. The incident that I am about to relate is a little out of the range of my subjects, but it happened while performing in Arkansaw, and I give it with the rest. The next day after the trial being Sunday, George Wells came from the bottoms, and told us there was going to be a negro dance in the cotton picking country, and wanted me go with him to see them have their fun, for it was funnier than a monkey show. He said it was close to a school house, and I could have a show before their fun commenced. A good trick you know. He said he was not going back till the last of the week, and would help me with my tricks; he said there was lots of change going in the cotton country. When the time came, we got our tricks and took the spring wagon, and I, and George and Warren struck for the "nigger land." We got there the second day, and put up at a boarding house. The place consisted of a Still house, a boarding house, several warehouses, and numerous nigger cabins. We seen "de boss" and got permission of the house, and had things fitted up before time to open. While we were passing the evening, we were kept busy answering the questions of the coons. One of them wanted to know if I wasn't Linzy Dowl, I told him I was Lorenzo's own brother. He wanted to know if I could raise de ole boss like Linzy could. I said yes, by trying right hard. "I golly we want you to try jist as ha'd you kin, we want to see how he looks." And every one began to talk about resin' de ole boss, and Warren told me to raise some trick to give them a scare. He went down in the country and got a bear skin and I placed some phosphorus in

the eyes, which in the dark resembles whitish fire. I charged the tube used in fire eating, and rolled a little cotton and powder in fine paper, and some brimstone and powder. When the doors were opened, they swarmed in like bumble bees onto a lame nigger. I showed them different tricks, which interested them very much, and began to want to see the ole boss raised. I told them he was an uncomfortable customer to deal with but if they were anxious to see him, I would call him up, and as he was monster-looking critter, they must not get scared to see him throw fire at them. "We not mista, we stan' to 'um, fetch um out." I told them that me and him were not on good terms, and I would have to hide behind the curtain till he left. I put on bear's guise, and came crawling out, and bumped myself up and sat on a chunk of wood, and said: "My colored friends, I came from the infernal regions to take you with me; how many are ready to go?" "I golly you no catch me goin' wid you, we'se knowed you befo' jist look at dem eyes, dey look like new quarters" "I golly, dey look siteful like new pie pans!" I began blowing the tube, and the smoke and sparks began to fly. Well, de lan' of co'n an' wine, what kind of a chap am he, look at dat smoke, nuff ter smoke 20 sides ob ole Ned. I rubbed the fire producing material together, and it began to fiz and flash. Well de great Masteh, I, se gwine to lumber out de fusting you know, ef he don't stop putty soon. I commenced burning the paper and brimstone, and the powder was snapping, and I kept blowing the fire from my mouth, and they began to make for the door, and I threw the paper containing the powder in the thickest crowd of wenches, and puff it went, and set their new cotton in a flame. Bould boys of Glengow, and great guns of Moscow! please hand me a turkey leg. * * * * There was a pond close by, and they went into it like a herd of fish in a grassy pond. While they were taking an evening bath to cool their parching gcwns, I scuffled off the bear skin and went out to see how they were making it. "Goodness alive boss, its a blessin' you did hide yo'self, fo' de ole cuss like to bu'n us out' They went home and changed clothes before the dance. We told them we were going home, and started off, but instead of going home, we went to an acquaintance's of Geo ge, and got

on a different outfit, and painted ouse'ves, and went back to the frolic. We told some of the cullud boys, that we was hunting a job of work, and if they would introduce us to some ob de gals, we would stay to de ball, and dey intojuced us to every wench in the muss. Uncle Jake the fiddler, got on a stool, stretched out one leg, shut one eye, shoved the fiddle under his jaw, and went to sawing, and singing—I'se gwine away, I'se gwine away, to-morrow! Eruph white folks, dance away, aint ye worry sorry, caise I'se gwine away. They got partners and such another outfit you never saw. A coon called them to order Heh now, all in de ring, circle roun' shuffie away, swing yo' turtle dove, ho-it-down, swing dat putty little bow leg Dinah—Heh you niggah, cum dis way.

When they got ready for another set, we went into another hut and I walked up to a wench and said, will some of you ladies dance wid me dis set. One said, yes seh, misteh, I'll 'company you. You—Fathers of fine fur and woolly noggins! how bad I felt. I seen something had to be done to get them started for we had no intention of dancing, and only asked them to raise it with them. I asked one of the boys if he couldn't git narry wench to dance wid him. I told them I had de puttiest wench in de gang to dance wid. I asked her if she was ready and she said, I don't 'pose to dance wid any body. all de time makin' fun ob us guls. I asked how I had made fun ob dem. You allus callin' us what we aint. I told her I had called her nothin' but a wench, and if she wasn't I didn't understand the African language. She gathered hold of a three leged stool and made for me. I began to back out and landed my heel on a young wench's toes. She clutched me by the hair and shook me like a dog does a snake—the other one was coming at full speed and there was a cooking stove under full headway, with boiling pots &c., and I give the wench a toss, and she struck the stove with her noggin, and then,

Fire that never queches,
See what adverse adventures,
I'm into with the wenchies.

The stove tumbled over, but the only injury done was the blow on her head, but that was sufficient. She screamed murder, I'se killed, I'se broke my skull, run fo' de docto' whar dat scound'l go, ef I git holt him I'll leab nuff him to feed de fleas, why didn't some ob you make soap grease ob him. It was supper time,

and they got their table ready and concluded to dance another set. We got some black wool, arafœtida and hartshorn, and went in and flavored their supper, I the wool, George the harts horn, and Warren the other. I was padding the pies and cakes, and butter, Warren scented the roasted shoat, and George everything else. When they come in, they commenced snuffing and—what in de wo'ld smell so funny. I hey passed round the bread and began cutting the po'k, and I bedoggoned if I b'lieve dat sumthun ails this meat, pue smell 'um, fo' goodness sake ! mus' a been a pole cat in heh. Dats what de matteh. They began to open the bread. "Great goodness, foun' a bird nest in de biscuit." Some one found a biscuit that was not padded and went into the butter, and a hook got the wool, and he raised it up on his knife. "Wondeh to Goodness if dat ole buggeh man airt been in heh an' done dis devilment. Dat jis what he am." While they were wondering over the mysteries of their decomposed snack, Warren said we must have more fun out them, and got the bear skin, and we stuffed it with cotton, and rubbed some phophorus on a piece of leather for its tongue, and put him in the room where they had been dancing, and hid. They looked for their disappointer, but finding no one, they expected it was de on'ey scamps dat was insultin' gals, and came flocking into the dancing room without a light, and they beheld old Harry with his fiery tongue hanging out, and his eyes like coals of fire. Monster living lions, how they screamed ! They hoed it down and got out of there. We ran in and got our bear skin, and went to our place and washed the blackness off and changed clothes and went to our boarding house. Next morning we got our team ready, and Warren said we had seen so fun with the bear skin, he would take it along, and it would be all right with the man who owned it, and he put it in the wagon and we racked out for home. We took in a good crowd and got a respectable remuneration. Give me a boost in a bramble brier, cut my corn with a carving knife, hang my head over a horner's nest, shove my shoulders in shocking machine, shine my shin with a shave,—one paper ink stand, two straw pens, three rubber tooth picks, and a dog's heel.

Beating them out of it.

Alf:—*Frog in the mill pond sitting on a log.*

Of all the shows that ever were,
There is none so bad I do declare;
As one that is fooling and never there,
And always stealing and cheating—
And of all the preachers that ever was known,
To make people shout and mourn and groan;
And talk with innocent and forlorn tone—
As the one at our last camp-meeting.

TO be honest, I must confess we done more work than necessary, to get the fun out of them we did, but "the half has not been told." We had tried several tricks at different places, and made up our minds to go some 12 miles across the hills, and as Warren was much interested, and was ready any time to go with me to find a situation. We traveled over the worst part of Arkansaw (that I ever saw), when we was aroused by a great big sandy haired imp, who wanted to know where we was going. We told him we was going to hunt a school house to have a show in. "Well, let me tell you where to go. You know old man Slater," we told him we knew Perry Slater. "This aint Perry, but you cant miss it, and you're sure to meet his gals before you get there, for they come here every day to steal turnips out of this patch, for they aint been here to-day, and they'll ask you for a chaw of tobaker." Do girls use tobacco in this country, we asked. "Yes, they all chew, and them Slater gals are the wo'st I ever seen, they watch the road and every man that comes along has to pony it up or get a cussen. I asked him what they would do if a man had no tobacco to give them. He says "that don't mend it at all with 'em, caise they know that a man allars has that excuse." We made a few more inquiries and started on. We had not traveled far till we met four or five slab sided gals, and we asked if they were Mr Slater's girls. "Yes, we're Slater's gals, who told you." I told them no one had, and asked where we would find the old gentleman. "Who, dad," says one. Yes your father, Mr. Slater. "He's to home, but nobody calls him old genteman nor mister, they jist call him uncle Josh, caise everybody knows him, and it's no use sayin' mister to him." We were about ready to start, when one of them said, "Mister, kin ye give me a

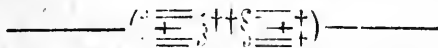
chaw of tubbacker." I told her I would do so, if I had it, but I was never man enough to learn it. "You're man enough to be an infernal liar, we know jist as well as you do, that you're tellin' a sneakin' lie, you stingy hound, fur one cent I'd splatter them store clothes with this clay mud, all began to sprinkle us with clay and gravel, and **only** saved ourselves by flight. We went to Slater's and procured the house, put up out our bills and returned home. At the appointed time we packed up our outfit and pulled out, and reached our destination in good time to get ready. Two overgrown fellows came in and asked some questions and said, they had seen our bills and they had a trick on 'em they didn't believe any one could do, and they had made a bargain to clean us out'en the naborhood if we didn't do as we had advertised. They said they had nigh two bushels of rotten aigs, and if we didn't show that trick, we might expect to smell 'em. I asked what trick it was, but they said it made no difference, if we didn't show it, we'd find out by the clatter of aig shells. That was final, and we knew it was cuting the man's head off. Our informers put out, and said they would be back and we might expect a good crowd, and if we done that one trick all would be right. We had nothing to perform the trick with and warned of our danger. This was the hardest scrape I had been into for sometime, but you know Rackensack Shack, is apt to come ahead if his name does end with a 'foote." After we light up, a crowd sufficient to mob a county, was there, but they were cool and all paid their quarters, and took seats, and they came in I noticed 2 or 3 baskets containing eggs. I told Warren to be ready to do anything I told him, and stretched my best curtains, and then I would have to change curtains alternately. I told them I had many tricks to perform, and would commence on the smallest first. I took an empty oyster can, and showed them that it was empty, and then showed them a piece of pine wood that would fit the can, and told them if any one would come and let me try, I would see if he was fond of strong drink, and a great big fellow stepped out and said I could not tell him what kind of liquor he liked. I told him I would draw the kind of liquor out of the can that he liked. Before I put the piece of wood in the can, I secretly dropped a sponge

filled with corn whisky and raised the can to his mouth and held a glass under it, and pressed the wood, and the liquor run out, He began to foam and crack his fist under my nose, and swore he could whip such a lian rascal blindfolded, and said he hadn't drank a drop since Washington was elected, and called for the 'aigs boys, lets give it to 'em now.' They got him quiet by telling him 'jist to wait, ef he don't show that trick we'll make it nasty for them.' I told them I would have to change my curtians to perform a different trick, and told Warren he could go and see if our horses were standing, the truth was to get them ready for traveling. He came back and said they were all right and I had changed curtains and told him to be preparing while I was performing other tricks. I had hung up an old sheet, and was I playing off something interesting to them, when all at once there came a voice apparently without, inquiring if Warren Wells was in there. I made very strange of it, and said there was some one wanting to see him, and told him hurry back, I wanted him to help me in the next trick. He went out and was talking to to the 'voice' which soon got out of hearing. I set everything out at the window behind the curtains and crawled out, leaving the sheet to keep them company. Warren had our horses ready and I have not had a faster ride since old Louse died. Talk as you please about ventriloquism, that was as fine a trick as I ever played with it. When we reached home, we found that we had made a good haul. Next morning Kate told us that a camp meeting was going to take place in the Smith settlement, close to the Porcupine school house, and said we must go, and we told her we was ready at any time. Quite a congregation had gathered to go with us to the camp meeting and Mr. Wells asked me if I ever preached at a camp meeting and I had never preached at one, but had heard much preaching done. He said if old preacher Horton found it out he would have me try it. The camp ground was in a nice grove and the stand was joining a cluster of brush and vines, forming a backwall for the pulpit, and the camps were constructed of brush and covered with leaves and bark, * * * * Mr. Wells brought the preacher home with him, and introduced him to me, telling him I was a preacher of the same faith as his church

and wanted him to have me preach a sermon. The preacher got after me to preach that night. I told him I never preached in that country, and that he might not like my preaching. But I partly agreed to help him that evening, and I was called on to open services, but I had become more reconciled than I was in the Possum Bend school house, and commenced in a better manner, got louder and louder, till every one on the camp ground got to shouting, and one old wench wanted to join the church, and I told her I was not their minister, * * * and I asked if she had been baptized, and she said "not zactly as you baptizes, but I guess it'd do, tother day when me and Jinks, my ole pa'dneh was crossin' creek on a log we fell into de wateh, and Jinks caint swin no mo' than a flat i'on, and befo' we got out'en it, I was as wet as if I had been baptized free times." I succeeded in getting the old wench off, on the old preacher who soon settled her gab. We had up a real excitment, and every body spoke highly of preacher Shacklefoote, and I was called on in every service until I became the leading "chicken eater" in the gang. To more than one new place was I sought after to partake of their chicken and sweet cake, and there was one family camped there, that owned a store not far off, by the name of Briggs, and had two as nice young ladies as any city, and I was invited to share the comforts of the family almost during the whole meeting, and accepted almost every invitation. The meeting continued for sometime, and began to get a little dull and old brother Horton said one evening that we must do some thing to revive them again. I told him to try them that night and if he could do nothing, I would try them again. He preached about four hours without much change, and I seen it had about expired, and thought I had better finish it with a little excitement than quit whipped out, so after brother Horton made his exit, I got up and proposed to have one more night of worship and then abjourn, which was agreed to. The next day I expressed my regret that I could not stay with them, but would be with them at night. I got Warren and struck for home. I told him that I would have a big sermon that night and wanted him to help me. I told him that after I had preached on the "End of Time" I was going to call for old Harry, and I want-

ed him to fix up in the bear skin and come out. That was just the kind of a job that he wanted and we went up, hunted up the old bear skin, and I painted it with phosphorus; and fixed up the fire tube and everything complete, and went back down to the "ground." I found them all waiting patiently for my return. I got up and commenced the sermon with the end of time, and had Warren secreted in the thicket behind me, and commenced telling them how nigh the end was at hand; and told them of the dangerous life and career that they were leading in running horses, playing their games of chertty, going to and getting up frolics, neglecting their Sabbath Schools, and Sabbath duties, and their duties to their Alwise Creator, I told them how often they had been offered the chance for repentance, but that they had hardened their hearts, and stiffened their necks against the word of repentance, and if they did not change their hearts, that they would utterly be destroyed and that without aemend. I told them that I did not believe that there was one in the whole congregation that would flinch or move, if old Harry would come right out from the bushes behind me, flashing fire and smoke from his eyes and mouth. I told them that I believed I would call him up and see. I noticed that they appeared to be a little excited and some of them began to shout and slap their hands, and mourn, and groan. I seen Bill Smiths eyes begin to turn white, and all the Smiths began to get scared up. I told them about how he would look if I called him up, and then said, Oh ye demon of eternal punishment, here is a set of heathen sinners that no one can do aught with;—come take them below with ynu. The brush began to crack behind me—and out came the horrible specter. Bill Smith gave one loud and long how-oo-oooh and down he come; but no one stayed to rescue him. Seats were kicked over, light sknocked down, brush patches split wide open; men, women, children, horses, dogs, negros and euerything, all in a mixed mess, horrible to behold.

Wah-hoo—tear my tongue out with a turning lathe—muckle my head with a mill-stone—sharpen my shans for corn splitters—no more bear skin tails just now.



CHAPTER XVII.

Getting racked out.

Song of the pldd Courters.

If you'll listen to me sing
I will tell you of something,
That is nice for you to hear;
I courted a little gal,
And her name you know was Sall,
But I soon got racked from there.
Then I also had a show,
And it was not any go,
And that was also a cheat,
And the reason of ths dread,
Was, a dog had stole our bread,
And that was also a beat.

SUFFICE it to say, that the bear skin ended the camp meeting without ceremony. You remember that the Briggs family kept a store some few miles away—the same store where I bought Nellies dress at, when she got her soapy. And so, after the acquaintance that I made during the meeting, I spent many Saturday evenings at the store; and was quite

familliar, I and Warren went there frequently, and Warren got about as nigh smitten with one of the girls as I was. One evening I asked Sallie if she would'nt just as leave talk to me a while the next night as not, and she said she had no cause to refuse, as I had always acted manly, and then I asked Matilda her sister, if she would bear company with Mr. Wells, that he was a nice young man, and she made no objection. I told Warren about it, and as we were traveling along the next evening, we run across Bob Snyder, Tom Smith, Bill Hideout, and others, who asked where we were going, and we told them we were going to a singing match and asked them to go with us. Bob said he didn't believe we was going to a singin' match and knowed he wasn't goin', and we went on, and went in the house and resting ourselves like we was in a boarding house, when we saw half a dozen big fellows sauntering around the store, and about night they put off. Towards 10 o'clock, we got to talking real interesting, and began to think the "dog was dead," but we was aroused by the sad intrusive sound of brick bats and flint rocks, and such a noise was never heard since John Brown raised a fuss at Harper's Ferry. The gals went in the other room, and we made for the back door, and got to the gate which was securely fastened, and we both tried to jump the fence at once, and down come the shackling fence and knocked over a lot of bee gums, and a pile of lumber, and as the country was thickly settled, the fuss raised all the barking machines, and we secreted ourselves in the brush, until it got still. and we went back cautiously, until we got pretty close, and heard their talk: Boys, that was a nice trick we played on 'em, and I wish they'd come back, I'd like to give 'em a little more. They thought they were tarnally smart, talking to them Briggs gals,—we'll larn 'em how to go sparkin' such gals as Sallie and Till Briggs, drot their livers didn't they know better than to spark sich gals, its a wonder they ever got a chance to talk with 'em, let alone sparkin' thar. But Smith said, well boys, that thar Shacklefoote jist made 'em think he was a reg'lar cuss, and thats how they got in wid 'em, but I want to see how they'll get out. We began to sidle off to get away without them finding it out, and in our course we met a pile of stove pipes, and went banging through, and that raised it again: "there boys, thats them cusses slippin' back, charge on 'em," and a volley of rocks &c commenced spattering around us like grasshoppers in a buck-wheat patch. We got into a corn field and circled round to where our horses were, and as our running was like a cyclone,

it scared them till they began pulling like an Irishman pulling at bull beef at a boarding house, and we both mounted the fence at once, and some 20 panels came down with an awful crash, and that made the horses break loose and away they went; their clattering shoes knocking fire from the flint rocks under their feet. We commenced putting the fence up, when another shower came on and we sought a place of safety in the brush, and staid there till we were sure that we was at liberty, and started for home. To our surprise we found our horses, and we mounted them, and that ended the courtship between me and Sall Briggs. After getting over our fright, we went in another direction, got a house and had our preparations for a good entertainment. We had a corn-dodger baked for a certain trick, and the magical coffee pot, from which you draw wine, whisky milk, water &c., being made of tin with secret apartments, in which you put the different liquors, and have them stopped, and you call for some article, and remark that you can produce any kind of drink called for, and you put your hand in the pot as if you was depositing the article in the pot and unstop the one holding the liquor called for, the others being stopped, will retain their own liquor, and you can repeat it several times successfully. We had brandy, milk, vinegar and coffee, some apples to make eatable candles with, some phosphorus to play the fire works with and other tricks, such as we could carry on horses. On our road we found a horrid crowd—a man was lying in the road, and inquired what was the matter, and they told us the fellow had taken some kind of poison, and I got off my horse, and found that he was as drunk as a whisky tub, and I got my bottle of milk, and drenched him, and he soon began to groan and I asked if they had given him anything, and they said they had given him some soda stirred in water, and thought it helped him, and thinking of my vinegar, I thought by stirring them together, it would ease him, but they had poured it all down him. The vinegar was as strong as a yearling calf, and I told him there was some good whisky, and he did not draw a breath, till the last drop was out, and as soon as the vinegar made its appearance with the soda, there was a mighty roaring set up in the old fellow, and after he was a little reconciled, I got my coffee

in it, and thought it was the one that had the brandy in. I told them to take a little snifter of it, and he would feel better. I reached him the bottle, he turned her down and gurgled the last drop out of it, I made sure that I had given him the brandy, and thought that he would soon be in a worse fix than ever; but on an examination I found that I had given him the coffee instead of the brandy. But it was sufficient to revive the old nerve, and we took our leave and traveled on.

We reached the hut later than we would liked to been there, for the crowd was all gathered around and soon as we got there, Warren had to go to taking in their fare, and I had all the fixing up to do by myself, I carried in the things and carelessly piled them up behind the curtain, very hastily, when the first thing you know, here went a great big beurla fiste, trotting out from behind the curtain with our corn bread dodger in his mouth. I did not know exactly what he had, but he walked along as easy as if he was afraid some one would hear him walk, until he got within about six feet of the door, when he sorter squatted down, raised his head, and gave one long and powerful leap, and I think he landed about sixteen feet outside the yard, and that was the last of our corn dodger. And while I was fixing around I sat the bottle of brandy down on a sort of a table and was not noticing much when an old fellow walked up and asked if I would let him taste it, I told him he rould, and I was very bust and went behind the curtain for some purpose, and when I returned he had sloped out and took the bottle along. Then while I was tumbling my tricks around I tumbled the apples out and away they rolled: the little boys gythered them up before they had scarcely cleared the edge of the curtain, and that put an end to that part of the performance. Now what another fix we are into again, all our liquid material gone, the milk, the viniger, and coffee, all wasted, and gone; the corn dodger stolen, the brandy hooked, the apples devoured up, and nothing left to show with.

I recollected that the old fellow that we had went to see about getting the house of, had told us that it was said to be very badly haunted, and no one would scarcely pass it after dark, and that the apparation was mostly in the form of balls

of fire flying through the house, and ghosts of different descriptions. I thought I'd hint it to them, and see if they were on the superstitious order any. I don't go too far; and after speaking of the subject, I found that they were as firmly given in the belief that there was a real supernatural jurisdiction held over the entire group. I made a few protestations against their belief, but it was of no use, they as firmly and unanimously upheld their opinion as they would the decrees of any faith. I told them that I would have to wait awhile before commencing the performance; that my other partner had not come yet and he had all the tricks with him. The real idea for waiting awhile was simply to make a few fire balls, such as could be tossed in at the window. I went behind the curtains, took some cotton and soaked it in coal oil, and made a few balls of it, then went out and told Warren to come around to the back window where I could hand him out the material, then I rolled up some paper balls and rubbed phosphorus lightly over them, and fixed up several other like fiery wonders and handed them out to Warren, and told him how to operate them. He fastened the cotton ball on a stick, and set it on fire, and whiz he took it right past the window. A wild cry of terror was instantly set up, and I raised the window to see what was the matter, pretending to have seen nothing, and told them that it was all imaginary and—whiz came one of the phosphorus balls through the window and passed out at the door. By this time they were beginning to stir around in real earnest, when zip come another ball and rolled across the floor till it came to a vacancy in the puncheon and fell under the floor from sight. Now, then, if ever you saw a whole herd of mules hemmed in a barn that had a floor in it, or a drove of Texas cattle hemmed in a stock yard, or a lot of wild horses all fastened up in a barn lot, you can have some idea of the clatter they made. They jumped over benches, knocked over chairs, stools, tables, and tumbled over each other, ripped, screamed, snorted, and lumbered out of there faster than a dog can run with a chunk of stolen meat in his mouth, and hollered as they went. "Ghosts! ghosts! ghost! run out everybody, run, run, run, for goodness sakes, run! that's old Bill Teal comin' back to scare us out o' hieer with his awful fire ball." Well, whether it was Bill Teal or not it served the same purpose, for soon as they cleared the door, they every "critter" of them, took their own course, and fled for dear life, and waited not for the company of Bill Teal, nor any one else. What a wonderful bad job it is again, got their money all for nothing but giving them a good scare. They, who innocently paid their quarters just for the purpose of enjoying a good evening's sportive pleasure; they to whom no grudge nor ill feelings were the least felt, they that had come on purpose to encourage the progress of the show, by contributing their portion of sustenance to the enterprise of amusement, and such was the treatment given them. Horrid thought; it was too late to whine about it then, so we just packed up our duds and down the road we traveled—and we nefer vas so solt in all mine life to so neither. Take mine teeth and tongue out I chews mine speck und proat mit for a peefsteak sausage mill—I didn't feel so leetle as vat I nefer feels before since mine frow leafs me.

CHAPTER XVIII.

*How to Swallow a Snake.*TUNE—*Shun the Bite of a Snattlerake*

In Arkansaw, there once did dwell

A showman that was known well,

CHO.—*Ri-tu-ick-a-di-da--oh--h.*

And this showman, one day did go

Down in the bottoms for to show.

CHO.—*Ri-tu-ick-a &c.*

He had scarcely shown half of his tricks,

When a poison serpent he did fix.

CHO.—*Ri-tu-ick-a-tu-ick-a*

He raised the snake up which he held,

And where it went, they could not tell.

CHO.—*Ri-twink-ah.*

OLD PANTHERFOOT.

NOW my fair friends, I have partly recovered from the bombard at Briggs' store, and the "artificial ghost" apparitions, and now what do you suppose will be next. But before proceeding too far, let me say a few words in regard to the Briggs girls. You, perhaps, remember that I have more than once asserted that I have never had one iota of feelings of affections for no one on this vast extensive universe, save the one that I have parted from long, long ago. The only reason that I had any desire to have conversation with Sallie Briggs, was because she was of such remarkably refined amiable nature, that I only wished to spend a few moments conversation with her, just for the amusement of her fine society that was so interesting to me; but felt no such thing as love or affectionate feelings for her, nor no one else since the last time that I ever beheld the beautiful little black haired, white faced, dark eyed, pearl nosed, ruby liped, ivory toothed, velvet skinned, beer bottle armed, coffee pot ankled, pelican voiced, low, dowdy, heavy, chubby, chunky, hunky, spunky little wood-duck of a looking girl that I have so often spoken of in the previous part of this volume. And moreover, after I had experienced a few such trials of courtship as I did there, I have decided on spending the remaining future in bachelory. But, notwithstanding all this, I still resolved on keeping myself on the look in for some chance of retaliation towards the perpetrators of interrupting my civil rights in courting Sallie a little, just for the amusement, and was not long in obtaining a plan. You see, after we got a little quieted about the matter, Beck Snyder let the "cat out of the wallet," and told Kate Wells that was Bob Snyder, and Tom Smith, and Bill Hideout, and a number of others that had played the game on us, and you see we kept an eye on the "cusses," and owing to the trouble that I had been into with Bill Smith since my introduction into the country, I was not on much terms of peace with any of the Smith family, and did not care much if I was'nt. But Smiths and Snyders were as nigh one, and as hard to sever as soft soap from rain water; and Beck Snyder and Kate Wells did not like each other any more than an old woman likes weak coffee for breakfast, and to get up a little spite work, Beck Snyder and Jane Smith concluded to have a little gathering down at Smiths, and to vex Kate they invited every one in the neighborhood but I and Wells' folks. We were no ways disappointed on receiving a blank card; for we had expect-

ed it, and then I and Warren wanted to see if we couldn't contrive some plan of repayment on our antagonistically bogus friends. The day on which the night following was to be the time for their sport and jubilee arrived, and I was thinking earnestly how I was to get even with them for their rude intrusive act upon me and the Briggs family, as well as the insulting non-invitation to I and my friend Wells. I knew pretty well about how the thing was running. Beck and Kate have not liked each other since they had raised a fuss about I and Warren going to Briggs, and Bob and his crew raising the row with us while there; and I knew too that Jane Smith and Beck had made friends since the time they had such a row at Snyders, and I knew that Bob Snyder and Jane Smith would partner off, and Beck and Tom Smith and so on, in rotation. But how was I to settle my account with them? I owed it justly and felt a deep anxiety to pay up like a man. There was but one idea that was available, and that would be at the risk of having some innocent person to share in the issue. I thought of many things that would be equally as desirable. I knew precisely the arrangement of the whole affair, for Nellie Wells had been over to the widow Snyders, and Beck had described in full detail the precise programme, and Nellie always told me of everything she heard—especially of Smiths—for she knew that I did not like them any better than a dog likes crab apples, and she liked to tease me about Jane Smith any how. She said that Beck Snyder had told her that they were going to make a great big pot full of candy, of maple syrup, and was going to have supper at midnight—which of course was invariably the rule all through the whole settlement, to have their lunch ready fixed and on a table, and just about the hour of midnight they would take a midnight dinner. Now I was not long in studying out a plan to bother them a little if nothing more, I knew that old Perry Slatter had a good lot of traps along the creek, and I knew that he also had several traps made of small nail kegs, which he had set in a peculiar kind of a manner; he would dig a hole in the ground about two feet deep, then balanced the keg on the edge of the hole, and put a bait in the back end of the trap so that when a vermin walked into the back end to examine the bait it would lift up before, and down behind, and into the hole it would fall, and hold him down by the addition of a lid fastened by a spring to the upper part of the institution. I knew that there were a certain kind of cats in them woods that their company were shunned as if their breath was not wholesome, and I also knew that they were as plenty as bad doctors in a sickly neighborhood, and thought if my company was not desired, that I would send my assistance in the best manner that I could. I knew that the most interesting guest was always the most welcome at the table, and was not particular about being in a hurry to send him in until towards twelve, lest they might get worried with his odorous perfume, before meal time. I told my right-hand-help-meet'em-half-way of the idea, and it was as satisfactory with him as it is to invite a woman to a quilting, and we sat out to seek our prize. We did not have to go a great ways before finding a huge old fellow, neatly secured in one of old Perry's patent traps. We had an old coffee sack along and we put the keg into it without opening the lid to examine the color, for we could test the savory odor without, and that was sufficient evidence of his excellencies. We suspended it onto a pole and, as we went

a good ways down the creek in search of him, we had not very far to carry our loading. We carried him up pretty close to the house and deposited him in a secure place, until we seen what for a time they were having of it. And on creeping up as near as we thought we dare venture, we soon ascertained what it all meant. We found that Bob Snyder, and Jane Smith had made a bargain to become indisolably joined together in the humble and contritiously sacredness of wedlock, and they were making merry over the coupled pair; we crept a little closer and found that all were exulting over the bride, and speaking in the highest terms of praise of beauty, intelligence, shrewdness of their bride. But, for the sake of human imagination, let me here occupy a little space in telling a little about how she looked, yet, I cannot near imitate the description: her hair looked something like the guts of a yellow pumpkin, or an old cow's tail soaked in linseed oil, or a bunch of flax that a sheep had been butchered on; her mouth looked a little like a trematis (tomato,) with a wagon wheel run through it, or a deep yellow musk melon with a slice taken out of its side, or the mouth of the largest yellow catfish that ever swam up the Arkansaw river; her nose resembled a large red pepper pod; her eyes were as white as the vapor snow, with alternate streaks as red as the brilliant brands of fire; her face was as red as the head and fob of a turkey gobbler: her teeth were as yellow as the Mexican brass, and her tongue was as long as eternity—no end to it. Oh! Moli! what fun they were seeing; there was old Perry Slater reared back and making the old fiddle hum as ever a fiddle can, do its best lick on Old Zip Coon; a set were on the floor all in deep anxiety to do their best for the amusement and interest of the newly wedded son-and-daughter-in-law. They had a good big pot of syrup on the fire boiling away, and at the other end of the fireplace was another pot with a delicious chicken pie simmering away. We crept cautiously up to the window, which happened to have something hung over it to prevent the passage of a current vane of atmosphere from a broken pane in the window. I carefully moved it to one side, just enough to take a cat's eye view of the affair, and the first thing that met my eye was the pots on the fire; for Nellie had mentioned it, and it was partly what I was looking for. There sat old man Smith right in the corner, with his cane laid across his knees, puffing away at his pipe as big as a goat in a barn lot; hurrying them up and bossing the crowd, and not knowing that there were any fireplace in the house. I told Warren to follow me, I knew of an old well down in their feed lot that had an old fashioned sweep to draw the water with, and it had a pole to it that had a hook on it, just the tick. I went down, found the hook, and dislocated it from the sweep, and started back to the house, and as we were returning we saw an old white rooster sitting on the fence. I told Warren to seize him by the neck and not let him squall, we went up to the house, and began to prepare for a job; the corners of the house stuck out and made a splendid place to climb onto the roof. You may well imagine that we were very careful about making as little noise as possible, but it was scarcely of any use, for I do not think they could have heard a thrashing machine running. I climbed up, took the hook, and walked up to the top of the chimney, reached it down, and fastened onto the pot that contained Esau's favorite dish, drew it carefully up, and handed it down to Warren and took the old rooster and crept

back, and peeped down into the house through a hole in the roof: they were as busy as ever, hooping, and howling, and stamping, and I seen they were in so much delight I thought I would help all I could: drot their little candy I didn't want none of that, but I thought I would put a little medicinal properties in it, and make it healthy. I knew sut was good for some diseases and did not think it made much difference what it was. I raised the old wife-and-husband-maker over the top of the chimney, and let him flutter right tail backwards down the chimney. Reader? did ever you see the dust fly from an old threshing machine, or rise in the road before you while going to a celebration, or did you ever hear the hoarse horrid cry of the shanghigh rooster, or did you ever hear the flopping of a watermill wheel; if so, you may have some idea of what kind of a splutter the old rooster made as he went wabbling down the chimney. I knew that the very first place they would look would be the chimney, and so I made it to the other end of the roof, and scaled down the corner, and made my disappearance in the darkness. Warren had already given them leg bail with the pot and thus we escaped capture and a severe trial of feloniously, maliciously and wilfully, hooking a pot of chicken sass right from under the noses of the whole crowd of them. Mutilated future felicity, and vacant mill ponds: if ever you heard a disturbance raised in all niggerdom, it was raised there. I think Bill Smith could have been heard clear and distinct as far as old aunt Dinah's cabin: he jumped up and down, cracked his fists, raved, threatened, screamed, squalled, and acted like a big fool at a frolic. You all recollect Bill don't you? Yes that was the very fellow; the one that took the frothin' spell. But Bill was not the only one that participated in the lamentations for the lost, or stolen pot; there was Jane Snyder the newly made bride of Stillhouse, Bob and Beck Snyder, and Sail Smith, and the old woman Smith; you just ought to have heard them drive off a little. Perhaps you have all heard geese gather 'round and chatter over the conquering gander, and give a few quank quanks at the whipped out flunkey, or have passed a farm yard where there was something like a thousand guineas all going at once, if so, you can have some idea of the racket them 're wimmin made about loosing their vessel of pottage. But their whoops, howls, and hissing of trip, tray, try, beeve, tige, and bull, did not bring back their lost pot, nor sever the sut from their candy, nor restore the singed tail feathers of Bill's big white rooster; for the pot had fallen into the hands of those who heed not the cries of the innocent babe, nor the wails of the tender feelings of the mothers, especially in a case like that. After they sorter settled themselves, we took a good lunch of the favorite dish of the circuit rider's and began to feel some better. We knew that Bob Snyder had some good liquor about the place, because he was never known to be out of it; and we was on the spy for the discovery of its whereabouts, and was not long in ascertaining its location. We had crept back to the house, and found that they were still keeping up the thundering noise, while old Mrs. Smith was in the other house, pottering around and doing something that we didn't quite understand. We thought she was going to make a big pot of coffee, from the movements she made, but on close watching we found that she was preparing to make what they called a stew, it was simply a lot of liquor put into a two

gallon coffee pot, as full as it would conveniently hold, and put onto the fire, and heated up, and seasoned up with different kinds of spices, until it was made mighty pleasant I tell you. We watched her as close as a woman watches her suspicious husband, until she got it hung on the fire, and then how was we to manage the thing? There was no one else in the house but the old woman Smith, but she was as good a guard as was needed, for I would sooner went in on a ferocious wild cat as her, for I had not forgotten the whailing that she had given me with the broomstick. But, how to get her out of there was a puzzle, I thought may be that some one would call for her in the other house, but then I thought it would be just as likely that some one would come in and that would be the end of my idea. Then I recollected how easily I had saved myself from being smeared with the products of a hen's nest, and so thought I would try the art of speaking from the quiz. I crept along till I got near the other house and called out to her, she came to the door and wanted to know what was wanted. I told her as near in the tongue of Beck Snyder as I could that uncle Isam wanted her to come in there. I then darted towards the other door, and soon as she went into the other house I made for the coffee pot of stew, hiked it off of the fire, and skinned out at the back door, and the way I hoossed down the spring path, until I reached the cornfield was't slow, shuah, You think you can imagine just how they acted when they missed their stew, but you've no idea of it, for, although we had receded to the farthest end of the cornfield we could hear them roaring away like a heard of cattle over a butchered and bloody beef. We had two more tricks to play before ending the performances, and the toasted whiskey that we had succeeded in securing put us in a fair way to finish up; we had taken a half gallon jug and placed about half pound of powder into it and put a fuze into it, and filled it up with a lot of sand; but we had rolled the powder in a roll of paper and got it as near the center of the jug as we could. After everything got still we crawled back to the house, as near as we dare venture and found that they were all, every lubber of them in the other house, fixing to take their midnight repast. I crept along until I found that the dancing room was entirely vacant, and still, and dark except the firelight. I sloped in, dug a big pit in the ashes, and buried the jug snugly and slid out, without sermon, ceremony, or benediction. By this time they had commenced in good earnest to try their facilities of mastification on the principal sustenance of human existence, and was having great joy over it indeed. We had carried our old prisoner up to a proper distance and was about ready. They had both doors closed, and an old window that had neither glass nor shutter had an old quilt hanging over it to prevent the extinguishing of their light; we stripped off the old sack and raised the trap up to the opened window and unfastened the lid, and down he tumbled right over Jane and Bob Snyder's shoulders who were sitting with their backs right against the wall of the cabin, under the window. He landed onto the table and the way he made dishes and gravy rattle and splash, was *non sancer in modo, ipso facto*. Thunder and blazes! if there was ever a fuss raised in Poreupine Hollow there was one raised there. Bill Smith blazed away at him with a teacup, and such a sweet scented savory has not been seen, heard, nor smelled, since Thomas Hope went a courting in Tennessee. They kicked, and stamped him all over

the house, turned over the table in their ferocious battle, and every one in the cabin was saturated from head to foot with the sweat of their opponent, until they edged him into the realms of vast eternity. Then there was great rejoicing over the murderous destruction of their intruder, and after they had massacred the old lad and tore round considerably, they all came out into the other house to resume their perpetration of "fuss making," and soon had it going again as lively as ever. Bob and Jane Snyder, Beck Snyder and Tom Smith, Bill Hideout and Sall Smith, and another couple had taken the floor for the dance and Sam Smith had placed himself in the corner. Bill Smith was somewhere around gazing on with as much eagerness as a doubtful lawyer listening to the decision of a jury, and all went happily on; the music arose, the driver of the reel commenced ordering them round, the clatter began, and they all went knocking kingdom coming out of the old oaken puncheons about as pert as ever you see it done. I had dug a deeper pit in the ash pile than I had imagined I had, and began to think that it had flashed in the pan, or the ashes. We had stole our way back to the house and was listening to their clatter when we concluded that our plan of giving them a little fright had failed, and was just thinking of starting home, when all in less time than a flea can bite you and then get away, a noise, a cloud of smoke and ashes, a flying of chunks of wood and fire, and pieces of jug, and more than all a wild cry of human voices mingled in each the most hideous in nature's collection. It was a sight not to be seen in every evening party in which we are called to witness. We knew it was no time for suspecting, or detecting the conspirators, and not knowing but some one was dangerously wounded, and probably all of them just helping each other, we ventured to go in to see if there was any chance of rescue; and on entering, there we beheld a most shocking sight. There lay the old man Smith tumbled back as if he was deadlier than a cod-fish, Beck, Jane and Bob Snyder, was stretched on the floor blacker than the cloud of distress, the rest was covered in dust and ashes, as deep as ugliness on an old maid. Bili Smith was jumping up and down like a turkey at a rooster, slapping his hands like banging two handsaws together, gnashing his teeth like grinding oyster shells, screaming like he thought the house was on fire—poor Bili! I tried to soothe his sorrows as much as possible but it was of no use, he still kept it up whooping and howling worse and worse, louder and louder, till down he comes sprawling in the floor, frothing and foaming, kicking and struggling. My old tow trousers! what another predicament! here they were screaming, squalling, howling, squealing, ranting. On an examination we found that there were no serious injuries except skinned faces, bruised ankles, faces scalded with hot ashes, and a partial deafness; we helped to get the ashes off of them and get them up in shape, and then we began to make inquiry as to how it had happened; they could not tell anything about it and as we had put on a pretty fair disguise, in case they should overhaul us in some of our other tricks, and owing to the smoke and ashes settling in their eyes and faces, and by us telling that we had been a con hunting, and had got lost, and had heard the noise and came in to see what it meant, we were not the least bit suspected. They thanked us very kindly for our service and invited us to stay all night with them, but we declined with thanks their kind offer, and told them that we could reach

home in a few hours, and as we went to start they told us how rude they had been served that night, and they believed that it was a showman that stayed at Wells' and Wells' cussed boys, that had done the deviltry, and said that they meant to find out if possible and pay em for it. We made very strange of it, and said that any one that would do the like was mean enough to steal bones from a blind dog, and bade them a very good night and sloped out, concluded to let them rest the remainder of the night. It was right ticklesome to us to see how completely we got off from being apprehended, and the two gallons of whisky well flavored and seasoned, and the supper we hauled out of the top of the chimney, amply repaid us for the trouble we took to do the thing up, and I believe we paid them well enough for the raid they had made on us at Briggs'. But they never found out whether it was us or not, that played the trick on them and so that squared us. Now after we had taken a good rest and recovered from our nocturnal deeds of desperation on the Smith and Snyder families, we set about it to get up another show. We had heard of a school house away down in the river bottom country, some three miles below the one where we had performed the feat with the bear skin, and fixed up to go down to try it a round. We had made a fair sum the first trip we had taken in the bottoms, and we thought we had as well do so again. I knew about what sort of a crowd I would have to deal with, and was thinking of some new trick that I might get off on them. I wanted some sort of a trick that would almost seem impossible to them, and still be plain enough that they would be compelled to believe it a real one. As we were camped up to take dinner, and feed our horses the first day we started, as you remember that it was a day and a half drive to the bottoms; we found a water snake in a little spring branch. I captured the gentleman, and caged him for performance. We traveled on and reached the bottom settlement the next-day by dinner, and gave out the word that I was going to accomplish the most startling transaction that had ever been in Arkansas, that I was actually going to swallow a serpent, a reptile, or a snake three feet in length. It raised a wonderful astonishment everywhere, and was carried from one cabin to another, until the whole valley was in an uproar, and by evening, every boy, nigger, and cotton picker in the settlement, was fixing to go to see the horrible sight. We went on down to the school house to be ready prepared to take in an unusually large crowd; for I had from their conversation prognosticated a "big run," and was not deceived. For the house was as full as a tramp is of buffalo peas. But before any one had started we went in to see what for looking place it was. It was hard looking enough I do say. I do not think the foot of man had tread the son around the door yard since old Ned was a boy. Pork stalks, smart weedas, clær bushes, and all such were growing, or had grown in rampant vigor, all around the premises. I opened a way into the door pushed it open and faltered as I walked in. Just as I cleared the door racing, I was startled to utter miserably by the wild fierce shriek of a huge big wild cat, almost as big as Jon. Bac. He made a leap at the window and finding that he could not make his way out, he turned on me determined to sell his life to the highest bidder. I seized the first thing that I could get hold of, which was a three legged bench about four feet long, made of a piece of an oak board about eight inches wide and met him half way. I knew it would be of no use to

offer a flag of truce, and concluded that the harder and fiercer the battle the greater would be the victory, and went in on him to conquer or perish with him in the affray. I peeled away at him as he came, right over the nose and face, and knocked him back and stunned him a little, but he was too good a grit to give it up at that and made another spring towards me in which I tendered him the same offer that he had refused to take with a little more force than I had before: he made the third banter and was given the same encouragement each time: the next time he arose, he endeavored to try the window; but I reached him one across the back with all the strength of my whole force and weight of the heavy stool that I held in battle, which weakened him to some extent, and by thus doing, it gave me time to reach my knife and pistol. I fired on him and lodged a ball in his brain, I fired on him again and he fell to the floor. Warren had been busily taking care of the team, and had heard nothing of the affair until I fired the pistol and when he came in there lay the wild cat dead as a dirt pile. We fixed up our tricks and so forth, and was not long until we was accompanied by a large crowd. We had concealed the wild cat behind the curtains, and told them all that we had been into fearful battle with a panther, and showed them the blood on the floor, and described the scene to them very frightful, for I knew that if it was anything like it had been that I would have to resort to some sort of a get-shut-of-em the easiest way that I could; and wanted to give them a little warning of what a dangerous location the house was in, in order to have a starting point in view. However, we took in their mites which counted up to a quite liberal sum, and commenced preparing for performance. I took the care and precaution to inform the company that we would have a show the next night, at the school house up to the Cotton Farm, where we had raised the old Harry before; and also took extra care to warn them to be on their look out for wild cats, panthers, and such like, that we had been tackled by a very large panther, and had heard the screams of wild cats as we were coming in and they appeared to be very plenty, all through the woods. Then I commenced the performance by showing some very wonderful tricks. I asked for a hat and told them I could pass a candle right through the crown, and light it to show them that it was really through the hat. I got a hat and took a piece of candle and placed a needle in it at the square end; then I took another piece of candle and showed it to the company for them to see if it was real or not; then I put the needle through the top of the hat and lit the candle and it blazed away like the genuine lamp—Jews and Gentiles! what a fuss was raised about that hat; the owner said that I had ruined his hat and I had it to pay for, or never leave that house alive. I told him that it was not injured the least particle, that I had made the hole sound and showed him the hat; but he said that I had just fooled him, and given him a different hat. I showed him my hat and told him how the trick was done, but nothing would satisfy him. I had done one combat that evening and did not care about any more, and so I agreed to give him my hat which was worth more hats like his was than you could pile into an old bee gum. Then I concluded that I would not try any more such tricks as would cost me my hat, and told them that I would show them the greatest operation and seeming impossibility that had ever been witnessed or that had ever been performed in any country. I told

them that I had the power to swallow one of the most poisonous, venomous and dangerous reptiles that ever escaped the woman's heel. I then went to my snake's cage and drew him out, and offered him for examination, but no one cared about making an attempt to handle him, and consequently I had no difficulty in proving that he was a real water moecasin; therefore no dispute was made, as the reality of the reptile. After I had shown him twisting and wrangling around my arms, and giving them a short and striking lecture on the art of snake swallowing, I raised him to my mouth as if I was going to bite his head off. I had on a coat with very large sleeves, and while pretending to manage him down my mouth, I had my coat sleeve so fixed over my mouth, that no one could tell but that the snake was crawling down my neck, but in reality, he was crawling down my coat sleeve. Of all the wonders they ever beheld, that one took the rag off their nose for wonder and surprise: they said it "banged Bob-tail" of anything they had ever seen or heard tell on. Many wonderful expressions were made over the masterly job of swallowing the snake, as they supposed was done in reality. After the excitement ceased a little, I stepped to the window behind the curtain and set the old fellow free, as I shook him from my coat sleeve into the weeds. When that was done, they wanted to see something else. I made several protestations, telling them I wanted to get away, 'lest the old panther that we had such a battle with, might come back to try us again; but they were determined on seeing more tricks. They said let em come, they wasn't afraid of a whole litter of panthers an' the old one throwed in. I then pretended to play something for their entertainment. I had Warren pretend to go and see to the horses. He went out and came to the window, and I handed him the mutilated wild cat, and as I was preparing a trick, I began trying to imitate the caterwauling of a wild cat, catamount or panther. I made a few squalls, and they began to get interested in it. I told them that I believed it was coming nearer. I gave a few more squalls, and Warren raised the old wild cat up to the window, as if he was trying to get into the house, and I gave a still fiercer scream, and talk of shrieks howls, groans and wails, there was no need of any more tricks that night, for fast as they could run out, tear, push out, crowd out or tumble out they did it. In their night and hurry to get out, I noticed the fellow that had my hat on, towards the door, and being in a crowd, I reached over and knocked his hat off and threw the one that I had on right down before him, and in his hurry he snatched it up without noticing the mistake and rushed out, and thus no wrong was done and the show was out. Oo-eh—of little faith—How would I oft have gathered around ye like a hen does her "food" but ye would not. Depart then from thence for you are incognito; for the poison of water snakes are under the lips, and wild cats instest thy way. You mean.

CHAPTER XIX.

A Night's Adventure with Fleas, Cats, and Other Bugs.

METER—*A Night of Sad Misfortunes.*

Night has come; and from rugs the bugs, bugs, tugs,
And o'er my weary frame the same game came creeping,
While we were sleeping, came weeping, sweeping;

As we lay upon the floor, they bore more gore,
 From our bodies, than any man can stand
 Or at least likes to, without a stout spout out
 And then to destroy, or among, decoy, alloy.
 The rest of our nap, comes that cat; scat!
 And then our sleep is done, till one gun won
 The victory of the night, in a quite tight fight
 With the mad Tom cat—the one that sat at
 The high house top; till, pop, whop drops.

THE TOM CAT.

WHETHER this book should be read for amusement, past time scenes, or instruction, is a matter of the reader's own fancy. But, for which ever it is read for, I do hope, dear reader, that within its divers of accidents that has actually happened to the unfortunate Author, that you may find some passages of both instruction, amusement, and interest before casting it aside; for, should such be the case, I shall be more able to bear the burden of loneliness that so wonderfully binds me to my station in this distant land of Arkansaw. Marvel not at my strangeness, in telling of my lonely condition. 'Tis not that loneliness of society, nor do I need complain of friends to prove untrue, for no friends could be more true and kind than those I have found here; but 'tis the loneliness at heart for the companion it yawns for in earnest continency—the one far, far away. And now my dear reader, before we part, let me call your attention to another little spell of scrapes, while we are in conversation on the subject. You, no doubt, remember that we had made arrangements to have another performance, before leaving the Bottom Country, and had also made engagements for the same school house in which we had given a show some months before; and on being a little familiar with the place, was better prepared to submit our plans to suit them better. And when we had taken breakfast next morning at the boarding house where we had put up after the scatterment, we walked out around to see what for prospects awaited us that evening. As we were walking around and viewing the situation we over heard a conversation betwix a lot of colored individjamals talking over the last night's wonders, and declaring that they wouldnt miss the show for nothin' in creation; one of them wanted to know what I was going to swallow that night. The other one told him he expected that I'd swallow him if I only took a notion "cause" says he, "swaliced a snake longer'n you is shuah, fo I seed it creep right down his mout I se shuah o' dot fac' I is." We had taken our guns with us, and not being in a great hurry to get to work about fixing up for the evening's performance, we took our guns and sauntered off down the bottoms to take a little hunt for squirrels, turkeys, and anything in the way of game. We run directly onto a pond—and such a fine lot of ducks as we did kill, you never saw. As we were returning back to our place of stopping awhile, we run right on to a great big dry land tortoise or "tarkle" as he was unanimously called by them yeller boys. When we came up with him, they'all wanted to know what we was going to do with that "tarkle." I told them that I was going to swallow him that evening and wanted them to all come in to see it done. "We comic less cat we will sho's you libin' we come," spoke up a dozen or such a matter of them almost simultaneously. We carried him into the school house and fastened him up to make them think that I was really going to swallow the old fellow in fact. Then Warren wanted to know how I was going to work my way out of it, pro

vided they wanted to see me swallow him, I told him that I would have to trick them out of it the best way that I knew how. I knew very well that I would have to do something with them for I had never scarcely had a show anywhere since I had been there but what I was compelled to try some kind of a scare, trick or something of the kind to get rid of them, and thought I might just as well begin one way as another. We had all preparations about ready when we commenced taking in the company and a better turnout I have scarcely ever witnessed since the time in the plow house. It took a good long time to get them all in and a sort of a settlement made among them. They all seemed to want to know what was going to be done, or what we had to show, or what we were going to do first; and every known question, both reasonable, and unreasonable, that they could think of they asked, and inquired about. I knew that something was going to have to be done before ever I made my escape out of there and took care to hang up a different curtain for fear some emergencies might from some special cause happen to take place, and a sudden retreat became necessary. I had brought the old "tarkle" out and laid him upon a sort of an old table that had been in there and probably had been used for a waiting stand for their worthy school master, anyhow it was there, and whether it had or had not it mattered not with me then, for I had made a "tarkle" stand of it. The way them young comy bucks did gather around and comment on the old innocent captive and sling out their plantation slang was wonderful to tell about, much worst to see, or hear. One would remark that "if I swollud dat nor chap I golly he'd hate a feed me." "Yes an' dat not all neidder, I golly I hate finish de grub I'e golly he eat a whole coon at one bite. He swallo a possum 'thout eveh tas'in' em." "Go way niggah he not agoin' to swallo' dat 'tarkle, him jist foolin' you fello's." "Yes but you'se got no so't of a idea what he kin do caise he swallud a snake las' night longen an yo' a'm." They were very deeply involved in the idea and while they were thus ejaculating over it a great big kinkey headed fellow come up and commenced—"lush up yo' gab 'bout semthun you don't know nofin' 'bout; dat no tarkle, bet de las' kink ob wool on my neggin dat no tarkle, bet you an'thing dat its made outen some kine o' ashes, o' else made outen fine papeh an jis' blowed up, an' when he goes to swallo' it, it'll all go to nofin'." "See yeh, dough, see hem eyes." One of them took him up by the tail and was swinging him around so that their philosopher could get a peep at his eyes. He was peeping a little closer than was safe for him if he'd known it, and as he was swinging in an uncomfortable condition, he made a grab at Sam's nose, and seizing him right by the end of his flattened looking proboscis and held on to him like a gander hold of a hog's snout. The great Governors Island! if ever there was howling done you may know who done it—why it was Sam of course, for he had a right to; but Sam was not all the one that was screaming as loud as a nigger could squall, they were every one of them and Sam too, screaming, squalling, whooping, and howling—beat em off, cooke him off, pinch he tail, cut en froat, fro watch on um, stomp u n on a floo' fro fieh on him back, punch ah eye out, Sam! Sam! bite ah head off, he suah to let go, hit ah wid a stiek, punch a knife in um." Here was Sam running around with the "tarkle" hold of his nose one that would weigh about four pounds, and by the knocks and jirks they had given him, knocking Sam's

head from one side to the other, his teeth had torn his phiz considerably and he was bleeding like a hog with his snout torn off. I seen that no one was going to venture onto him, and I knew if they kept banging him over the head in such a manner as they were, they would hurt Sam worse than the old "tarkle," for every lick they made Sam would dodge and then he was sure to get hit by some one on the other side. I ran up to him and grabbed the old "tarkle" by the neck and commenced to cease his drawing of breath. I finally got him loose from Sam's phiz and he said, "goodness alive Misteh, good thing you got 'em off, for 'clar' to gracious like a Leat my head off'en me dey did in fac." There was a great to do with them about the old tarkle nibbling away on Sam's nose. They said that they wanted to see how I would manage him; but I was not so sure that they would ever see me try him at all, for I did not like the way he held on to Sam, for it showed his grit and it seemed to be very hard at that. I seen very plainly that I was going to have to do something in order to get out of another snap, and a bad snap it was, for he had already snapped one nigger and I didn't intend, if I possibly could help it, to be counted in with Sam or any of the rest of the niggers, much less to be in another snap with them any more. When things were straightened around a little and the squad got settled down to a more civil point, I commenced to try some other tricks. We had some dry straw out in the wagon which was not far off, for we had left it out in the lane, and I made up an excuse that I had to have some to get off a certain kind of a trick with, and sent Warren to get some; he went out and got a good lot of it and I threw it down behind the curtain to keep till I got ready for it. Then I thought I would play another trick before I dismissed them and commenced on a trick to show the magic dagger, which you remember was a knife made so as to allow the blade to push up into the handle and on pretending to pierce any one with it, it would, to all appearance, run into anyone's side but instead it would only run into the handle and press against a sponge that was fixed in the end of the handle filled with polk berry juice which would flow out and run down the blade as if it had been dipped in human gore. I called up a young dusky looking fellow and told him to examine the knife; he took it and not finding out the deception declared that it was a genuine skinner knife. I told him that I could run it clean into his side and he would not feel it. "You don't kotch dis chile foolin' dot way wid sich a knife as dat." I thought I'd just scare him a little to see how he'd act. I gave a little punch at him; the blade hung fire, at least it caught some way and failed to slide up into the handle and it drew a little real nigger blood. Death's deepest dungeon! Huh-eh! How he did charge around. "Oh, fo' Massa sake, I'se killed, I'se killed; run fo' de doctor to sow me up quick fo' my intels runs, falls out, I'se stabbed right fru de hea't, he-eh, cut mine livah out; muddch, muddch. I'se a gone up niggeh dis time." Every cullid indiwidjnal in the house was in uproar, screaming, "kill de dod drotted, orney scoundrel, knock head him off, kick him out ob de house, stomp him, stomp him." But I still held the knife in my hand and they did not seem anxious to run over it. When the fuss had subsided a little, I told them that there was nothing at all the matter with the black rascal, and after they examined the cut it was nothing but a small scratch, scarcely through the skin. They all took their seats and ordered some other trick played. I

had, accidentally because I wanted to, spilled some coal oil around over the straw and the edge of the old curtain that I had suspended in case of accidental combustion. I then commenced preparing for the "fire works of destruction" which I was pretty sure would take place. I began to rub pieces of paper and phosphorus together and make them blaze wonderfully, which tickled the little nigs most pleasantly. I would throw them around over the house in every which direction, very carelessly right where I wanted them, and one of them falling right in among the straw, ignited with the oil and an *ignis fatuus* was at once set up. It blazed and flamed and flashed, worse than a pile of powder would. There was hurring too and fro, the cries, shrieks and screams were heard and before you could say Mary Ann Dog-tail, three times, with your eyes shut, the house was entirely cleared of "coons" or nigs which ever they are a mind to call themselves. I had a bucket of water all ready for the purpose and soon as they all got out I deluged the thing with the water and so this you see ended the programme for that evening.

Now for another trip home. We had taken in a very fair fare for our two performances in the Bottoms and thought we would go back to our respective place of abode to recruit up a little over our laborous job. Next day we had several little jobs to do and see to. Warren had taken the borrowed bear skin with us, and had to run down to return it to its owner, and so, before we got ready to start for home it was getting along in the day towards the time for the dinner horn to be used; yet nevertheless we pulled out toward where Kate lives. We traveled on until very late in the evening, and until that glorious bright meteor that has gladdened the heart and dazzled the eye of so many mortals throughout the length and breadth of the wide world, was fast waning away beneath the expanse of wide western waters. We had a usual place that we generally stopped at to stay over night, but owing to the late start we had got that morning we were compelled to haul to before reaching our certain point. We called out an old fellow sitting on a fence close to an old double log house and asked if we could get to stay all night with him. He crawled down off the fence and came out to the wagon to see what we wanted. I told him, as loud as I could hallow, that we wanted to stay all night. He said we could stay, and said that he was a little deaf, and I thought myself that he was a little deaf, about as deaf as a bass drum. We got out and put up our horses and went into the house, a crude looking affair it was too. The old lady dusted around and had supper ready in a short time. We went in and took supper very heartily of fine roasted pork and pumpkin, and after supper we went out into the other house. I thought I'd try and raise a little talk with the old fellow about something if I could get him to hear me, just to see how he would talk. I made mention about the wheat crops, and happened to say something about the chintz bug in the wheat. "The what, the chinchies? Well, yes, I'll tell you how it is, the old 'men she's got so much to do and she's got no time to scald the old bedsteads, and these old buildin's is got so full of 'em that its a hard matter to get shet of 'em anyhow. Well, they aint nigh as bad as they was awhile back but they're putty bad yet sir." Then you may know that I had to do some pretty loud talking to get the old fellow to understand what I meant; but I worried him around until I got him to partly understand the sub-

ject, and he made a substantial apology for the incomprehensibility of the defective hearing, rendering him so unapprehensive of the suggested dialect. The old fellow was very talkative and fond of conversation, and when I got on equal footing with him again, or equal tongueing^g whichever you're meddlesome enough to call it, I commenced asking him a few more leading off questions about hunting deer, turkey, bear, and so on and so forth. He told some most interesting tales, for a certain fact, and I asked him many questions about his hunting sprees and he would answer very particularly whenever I could make him understand. He said he had lived there a great many years and people had come into the state and went out a great many times since he had settled there, and told him of many new countries where they could get land give to them, and of these kind of tales, but still they'd sidle around and come right back to Arkansaw. "Why," says he "Arkansaw is as good as they'll ever find, because I'll tell you why, you can raise your cotton and tobacco here, your hogs has alway got plenty of mast; there's always fruit here, and the light wood—laws a mercy I wouldn't no more do without the pine knots that's here than I would nothin' in the world, and its on no use of talkin' to me bout their new countries." I, from some cause, turned the subject adroitly onto the fishing qualities, and asked him how it was for fish. I told him that I had seen a fellow catch a remarkably big cat-fish out of the big Arkansaw, that bothered him some about getting him out of the river. The old fellow had not got the "hang" of the subject and hearing the words "cat" and "bothered," went off on it again in the usual manner; "Well, yes, I hear the ol' oman complainin' about an old cat a botherin' round here of a night, but I never hear anything of 'em though; I hate to be tormented with a drotted cat squalling round of a night anyhow, and I'd shoot him in a minute if I se to hear him around." Well what another time I had to get him on the right track. Soon as I got him straightened out a little again I took care to let him go his own road on his narrations of his early settling in the country. He continued his history as long as he could easily hold out and then the old woman made us down a bed in one corner of the cabin floor and told us whenever we got ready we could lay down. It was a real warm night in the early part of the month of September, and as we had taken some very strong coffee for supper, we did not rest so very easy at any time during the night. We lay upon an old straw bed that I do not honestly believe; the straw in it had been changed since the first time it was filled when they landed in Arkansaw. The old folks occupied a bed laid upon a bedstead constructed in the following manner. A post, or hickory pole, trimmed of at the lower end and placed in a two inch auger hole in the puncheon floor. This post had a hole bored each way through it at the top and a pole fitted into the holes each way, forming a rail, and a hole bored into the wall and these poles or rails placed into them, forming the entire stead. We rolled and kicked and tumbled around most wonderfully restless, till toward eight or ten o'clock in the night when we had something else to do. We began to feel something horrible creeping over us! What do you think it was? Ghosts? No, not that; Was it dread or fear? No, it wasn't that either, it was something far more tormenting and treacherous. Something that no one can rest in peace where they inhabit; something that has caused

more misery, pain, dread, horror and sleepless nights than any and all other woes put together; the heartless, savage creatures steals stealthily upon their victims under cover of darkness and piercing them to their very veins, rob them of their blood; horrid monsters. Would you know the names of those monsters? They are the common bed-bug, common not in their administrations of bloody deeds, but very commonly known in old log cabins in Arkansaw. They poured in on us worse than women going to a wool picking. I could hear them as they would walk out on the joists over our bed and drop down onto us dab, dab, dab, they come, like hickory nuts falling; they swarmed around us, and over us, and onto us, worse than minnows round an old rotten rabbit, nibbling gnawing and piercing us to our painfulest feeling. Oh, how they did hurt. If any of you'ens suffered like we'uns did, you certainly can sympathize with us. If ever you had a pegging awl soused clean into your shoulderblade, up to the handle, you can tell something about how they felt when they took a good hold and gave a surge on us. We knocked and kicked and fought manfully, but the more we fought the more they rallied us. They were, to all appearances, from the size of the point of a fine cambric needle to that of a good big griddle-cake; they hauled and tugged at us, they stung like bumble-bees, smarted like aquafortis poured over us, and hurt worse than if we were being skinned alive. Oh, oh, land of massa, how they hurt, how they hurt. I took an old quilt and crawled over into another corner of the cabin and laid down upon it and was not interfered with for a good little while and had partly fallen into a doze; directly I began to hear them falling from above as fast as you ever saw snow flakes fall from the clouds; they commenced taking hold on me and shaking me all over as if to say to their comrades, "Come on boys, he's here now, lets give it to him right." I fought for life, or for my hide, as they were making a riddle of it faster than you could eat green persimmons. I kicked and struggled and struck and slapped with both hands till I was almost gone. I got up and took the old quilt and went out onto an old peach at the back of the house and laid down again to see if I could get a little rest. The old quilt was "sorter" fractured a little and it had carried about three quarts of them along in its tattered vacancies, but by faithfully battling with them for a few hours, I finally got them worried down till I could rest a little between bites. I began to rest a little better, occasionally crushing and demolishing an old warrior and dappling the old comforter with his dreadful stench and gore. Before long I had murderously stricken them with such a violent attack that they began to cease their destructive devastation. I was beginning to be more at ease and commenced dozing away in a happy snooze, dreaming of some lovely scenes, or fairy land, or olden times; I was fast wafting away to that happy place of dreamland, and enjoying a pleasurable nap which appeared to me as deep and profound as Rid-Van-Winkle's continued nap, hoping in my dreams to reach the dawn in that pleasurable condition. I had not enjoyed the satisfaction but a short time until I was aroused by one of the loudest, wildest, fiercest, hideous howls that ever pealed out upon the balmy, calm night air. I started from my slumbers; what could it be; I asked my conscience, could it be possible that an animal no larger than a panther, could squall so loud as that. I could think of nothing else that could scream so loud and shrill. I was not left long ponder-

ing over the wonder, for like the sad, shrill shriek of the mad fierce lion showered forth the deafening mew ow-oh-ow of a large Tom-cat. He kept it up, squalling and climbing over the house, throwing off boards, rattling and tearing things in every direction; howling and prowling. I got up and went out and hiss-catted and clubbed him off of the house and hissed the dogs on the "cussed Thomas," and thought that I had got him entirely off of my hands, or off of the house, I don't care which you call it, and went back and fancied I'd finish my sleep out. I crept back to my "wallerin'" place and stretched myself down and thought I would have no more difficulties. The bugs had by this time had cleared out and given me free access to the pallet and was preparing to use it to the best possible advantage. I commenced snoring away again at the rate of forty miles to the snore. No sooner had I got permanently located into a sound refreshing slumbering attitude until I was torn right out of my sleep by the same horrible howling right over my head where it had happened before. I though I would drive him away again and see if he wouldn't go some where else to have his fun. I got up again and slipped round the house and picked up an old brickbat, and peeping over the eaves of the house, I saw him right on top of the comb of the roof, and just as I made a swing to throw he fetched another squall and I let drive at him, yow-ow-ow he went, tumbling down the other side of the house and away he went again. Now I made sure and certain that he would stay away contented, for he could not fail to feel such a tremendous blow, for I do not think it could have left a sound rib in him. I went back to my battle field and thought that I had given him the hint to stay away. I did not expect him back that night. It was then getting late and I was getting sleepy, for fast as I had fallen asleep something, generally the Thomas, would awaken me immediately, for had "Rip" ever heard the squalls of that cat he would never have finished his nap, and moreover, had he been trying to get off to naps house in that cabin he would never have made the rattle. I was almost returning to a good sound snooze when I was again frightened almost into a sense of insanity by the same horrid yell, right on the very same spot where I had just thundered him off from with the brick-bat. Yow-ow-ow. He kept it up, one yow-ow-ow after another as loud as he could possibly squall. I crept out and thought I would try a different plan on him this time. I did not want to kill him instantly, for that would be putting an end to his pleasure too quick and not be giving me room to get even with him. I thought I would give him a little fright to show him how he had been imposing on me and then I thought I would give him a little hurt to pay him for the trouble I had taken with him. I went in and got an old holster pistol and cut a slug of bacon off of a piece that I had noticed hanging against the wall. I put down a good charge of powder and then the slug of bacon and went out to try my aim on him. He was right in his highest pitch of glory, bawling like a steam boat whistle, walking to and fro with his back raised, his tail frouseled, and eyes shining like jack-o'-lanterns. I drew a bead on the hump of his back and fired. Farewell to father land and Robinson Crusoe! A sheet of flame, a cloud of smoke and a constellation of stary sparks went up, and what do you think came down? Why, like the enraged wild lion from the wilderness of Af-

rica. came rolling, squalling and howling, the same old Tom-cat, helter-skelter, right onto my shoulders with all the violence of a mad tiger; squalling, and screaming like a wild, wounded panther, biting, scratching and clawing. I kicked and knocked and banged him with the stock of the old pistol, but could do no more with him than if he had been an enraged mangorilla. In our combat I stumbled round and down we tumbled under an old shed among a pile of old barrels and plunder. I tussled him around until I got hold of an old corn cutter and by dint of hard labor I finally succeeded in laying the ferocious monster at my feet; this done I was not interrupted seriously any more that night, save a few horrid dreams of the late battle that I had underwent that night. Next morning as early as we could get off, we were after traveling toward our hum. Farewell, for the present time, only sing me a letter from home—tell me a song to my gooseberry blossom—write me a picture about my gal, Tom.—The soft southern breeze has soothed my cares and now I must leave you for a short space of time.

CHAPTER XX.

Summary, Conclusion and Farewell Address.

TENOR—*The first dawn of winter.*

Good bye, good people—I have done my best

My conscience for to ease,

Through this little volume to interest,

And you to try to please.

And if I have not, it is not my fault,

And if I've not, I cannot,

So it is no use over it to halt—

I remain your servant.

—SHACKLEFOOT.

MANY, many have been the startling scenes, difficulties, since my sojourn at my newly found home in Arkansaw. But, the one that I am now about to relate, is probably the most wonderful that I have experienced in the State. Not many miles from Mr. Wells there was a bayou, that was very remarkably noted for its fine fishing opportunities; and early in the month of May after spending the winter very amusingly at Mr. Wells, we all concluded to get up a fishing party and go down to some of Mr. Wells' relations living near the bayou. There were several of the young folks from the neighborhood and all of Mr. Wells' daughters, Katie, Nellie and Susie. We arrived at our sought for resort at the bayou. It was a very large portion of water extending back from the river, and about the center of the body of the bayou was a small island, several hundred feet long, and a considerable amount of logs, bushes, and other features, unobservable from the shore, which was a good distance away. It was as I have before stated, in the early part of May, and a more lovely afternoon I can scarcely remember. I had become greatly attached to the young ladies, especially Nellie, as she was always more merry, and took a great interest in always trying to please and interest me. Although kinder hearts nor more pleasing manners were never possessed by tender maidens than

either of those three; yet I could but hold a reverence towards Nellie. You may, perhaps, suppose that I was naturally in love with her; but, if so, you accuse me very wrongly. 'Tis true, so far as I ever loved any one within the life boundaries of friendship, I did love all three of those ladies, and had a just cause to, for they have been to me as kind and pleasing as any one in this could ever hope to receive any kinder friends than they, could scarcely be found. But so far as the true feeling of love, I would only refer you to "Tom"—the one far, far away. Well, however, after we had reached the bayou and got all things straightened around and had been fishing considerably, with fine success, and everything passing pleasantly, some one suggested the idea of taking a boat ride; there was but one boat, and it was very small—so small that no more than about four persons could safely be carried in it at a time. The water was very calm and still—a beautiful time for the occasion. The girls were none of them use to the boat riding, and would not venture out upon the water. Several of the young men rowed about in the boat to show them that there was no danger in it, and, finally Nellie said that if I would go across to the island that she would go with me. I thought she was only jesting and thought I would see how far she would go before getting scared out. We got into the boat, and pulled in the direction of the island. The water was very smooth and nice, and the boat moved as gentle and easy as an old slide on a deep snow. We still moved on towards the point we had started for, and whether Nellie was to gritty to say turn back, or whether she wanted to see the island, or whether she thought that I would turn back, I could not say; but we kept on going until we reached the island. We did not stay but a short while, for there was a dark cloud beginning to rise in the north-west, and we hurried into the boat to hasten back to the shore. Scarcely had we reached the boat, when a fearful wind arose, and the water began to roar and foam like the roaring billows of the Atlantic. The cloud approached in magic rapidity and darkened as it approached nearer. The waves began lashing against the sides of the boat, almost filling it at each surging wave. We had not proceeded more than thirty or forty paces from the shore, and the boat began tottering like a nervous maniac. Nellie suggested to row back and wait till the storm subsided before undertaking to cross the stormy water. I succeeded in turning around and was just nearing the shore when a fiercer gale of wind tilted the boat to one side and poor Nellie was gone—the wind continued to blow—I leaped after Nellie, and fortunately caught her before she sank, and started with her to the shore. She gave one heart rendering shriek, and was pulled from my arms by a large alligator. But, by some lucky problem, he dropped his hold, and as he was traveling pretty fast in his direction for the deep water. I again caught Nellie and reached the land before he could get turned around and up to us again. I ran to a high log with Nellie, and placed her upon it, and had scarcely done so, until the old fellow was coming in all his wonderful rage: happily for me I found a large piece of wood that had to all appearance been blown off of some tree, as it was very large at one end and tapered off with a sharp splintery end about four feet long, and very heavy I grabbed it up and intended striking him over the head with it; but, as he came he threw his mouth open as if he meant to swallow me right down at once. I raised the piece of wood and just as he came within reach of

me I stoved it about three feet down his throat; then with a hatchet and large knife that I always carried with me in my belt, I split his throat clean through to the piece of wood that I had thrust down his mouth, and thus put an end to that part of our troubles. During my battle with the alligator the storm had tended to cease a little, and when I had finished the offender, Nellie came down and asked me where the boat was. Farewell to Madame Tucker! now what a fix we are now in; here we were in as bad a snap as Robinson himself was ever in; our boat gone, probably swept into the Mississippi. I told Nellie to go back to her place of safety for fear some more of them intruders might come along. She climbed upon the tower of safety, and I struck out to see if I could find the boat. I traveled around the edge of the coast till I came to the South-eastern end of the "Bahama," and there in a sort of a nook the waves had lodged the boat. The oars were fastened to the boat, and I drew it up to the shore and turned it up until I got all the water out and then I rowed back to where Nellie was. The storm, by this time had ceased entirely, and if ever you saw a happy girl in all the by gone days of your life it was Nellie when she saw me coming with the boat. She came running down to me and I helped her into the boat and we sat out for land again. The water was rather rough and we had to row cautiously, but finally we made it to the landing. The whole party was almost in a state of convulsion when we returned. They had sent for a boat and was expecting to find us swept to the bottom of the waters. It was then getting late, and owing to the ducking that Nellie and I had got, we were all willing to break up the fishing spree for the evening. And so, consequently, we all took to a notion of leaving the place, and scattered out. It was not a great ways to the relatives of the Wells' girls, and we reached the place where we were stopping at before night, and was made mighty comfortable with some good old apple jack that their old uncle had an abundance of always on hand; and a cleverer old gentleman than him never lived. We stayed several days in the neighborhood visiting the friends and relatives of theirs and fishing and hunting. But I warrant that it did not happen that Nellie and I ever visited the home of the alligators any more while on our fishing excursions. I would liked to have told you about some of our hunting and fishing sprees that I and George, and Warren Wells, and the rest of the party had while there. But I have now occupied more space, than I intended to in giving the brief summary of this account of the terrible encounter and escape from being swept away in the storm, or being devoured by alligators, and whether it has the wonderful shocking effect upon you that it had on me I am unable to tell; but, have no idea that it ever can; and now before bidding you a final adieu, let me make the following

CONCLUSION.

You remember Mollie—the first one of whom I have spoken; the one to whom I got into the first scrape with, about the letter. The one that married the kangaroo of a man. Well she is married to him, and lives with him yet, and has got two the prettiest little girls this side of anywhere. The lawyer is still practicing in the same town where "Big Bill" and I got our liquor at, the time we routed him. Big Bill, poor fellow met with his fate in a combat with a blacksmith. Old Solomon got his arm torn off with a threshing machine to

pay him for some of his meanness. Mary Ann is attending the Morgue at the Flat. Em has been married and left her man divers of times. Warren Wells still continued his courtship with Matilda Briggs, until he managed to make her his frou. Katie, Susie, and Nellie, are neither of them married yet. And "Tom" is still her mammy's big fat gal. And now I will give you my last and final

FAREWELL ADDRESS.

Now my dear readers, I am about to bring my history to a focus. And in doing so, you can scarcely imagine the solemnity it brings over my weary feelings to write these closing words. When I think seriously upon the past scenes of my early life; when I think that I am now yet a young man—scarce thirty—and to think that should it be that my future years should ever be marred by the same trying ordeals as my past life has already been, it makes me quake and shudder in dread of the thought itself. And then to think that this book may fall into the hands of those who may doubt what I have written, only because their own life has been smoothly and uninterruptedly disinterfered with throughout their whole life, and think it utterly impossible for a man to undergo such painful trials, and disconsolations as I have experienced, and the sad misfortune to bear. And yet, although I have endeavored to give you the full history of my life, I find by writing thus far, that it would take a much larger volume than I now have time to write, or than you would take the time to read. For, when I started out, I intended only giving you the trials and discontented performances alone, but have departed from that rule, and given in connection a few subsequent difficulties that came almost simultaneously in addition to the same subject. Yet I have passed over the greater portion of my life's history in the way of courtship which I intended appending to this work; but have not time nor space to spare at the present to subjoin. Although, should this little volume find favor with my fellow readers, I shall in a short time give an account of some of my most important scrapes that I have been into before embarking on this great voyage in the State of Arkansaw. And if so, you shall hear something more about the veritable Mary Ann, and several other such stories as—The party at old Sols—The Trap laid by Mary Ann—The old Roasted Rooster against Oughts head; and many other great difficulties. And now let me hope for your future happiness and pleasure—that your life throughout its course may be of uninterrupted pleasure and enjoyment. That it may be like a tree planted in a favorable place that its roots, rootlets, and toproot, may drive downward and taking hold on a firm foundation, that its branches may spread upward, onward and outward, bearing the leaves of contrition, the flowers of repentance and the fair fruits of your future anticipation. That it may be like some clear foundation springing forth from the humble rocks, twinkling along down the spring branch of your journey of life giving nurture, strength, and refreshment to the herbs, plants, and flower, as well as the cooling palliation of thirst to the birds, bees and animals, traveling the whole journey and pilgrimage of life, until it reaches that glorious emblem that shall roll and roar illimitably boundless, fathomless and irresistible to everlasting eternity. That your future prospects, and all your undertaking, especially in the case of trying to win your gal's good opinion, may be as seed cast by the wayside, and

falling upon good ground—may bring forth the fruit and fatness of your highest expectation. May your life be one of a more smoother and comfortable, as well as more progressive and uninterrupted as mine has already been; that you may never know the painful feelings of such galling fetters within which I have been so strongly bound. May you never sip the bitter draught that I have already sipped. May you never know what it is to be robbed, ruined and ransacked by some heartless gal, and then turned coldly from her with cruel contempt. And finally, may you never see cause to shed one tear over hopes deceived, love destroyed, smashed and smouldered, and the hearts fondest feeling crushed in its highest promises, as I have been the unfortunate to bear. But may your star of happiness rise in your earliest days, and continue to guide you aright, throughout your declining days. May the cloud of despair never rise to obscure the brightness of your joys and pleasures. May your sun of hope rise in magnificent splendor, and continue to shine throughout your days of pleasure, and finally, when it sinks beneath the great horizon of Time, that we may all come together in one vast assembly prepared for our departure from this world of woe, is the hopes and desires of your humble servant.

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